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TOBIAS CRISP D.D.

Obijt Feb. 27. 1642. Ætatis Suæ 42.

CHRIST ALONE EXALTED;

IN THE

PERFECTION AND ENCOURAGEMENTS OF THE SAINTS, NOTWITHSTANDING SINS AND TRIALS.

BEING THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

TOBIAS CRISP, D. D.

Sometime Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Brinkworth* in Wiltſhire.

CONTAINING

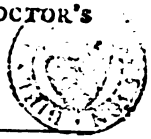
FIFTY-TWO SERMONS ON SEVERAL SELECT TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

NOTES EXPLANATORY of ſeveral Paſſages in them, with MEMOIRS of the DOCTOR'S Life, *&c. &c.*

By the late Dr. *GILL.*

Sam'l. Miller. 30/



THE FOURTH EDITION, CORRECTED.

Mr. COLE, in his Treatiſe on *Regeneration*, ſays, "This Work "ſavours of a *true Goſpel Spirit*; they who carp at it, I fear, will "be found wider from the Goſpel in their Principles, than this "Author (as they vainly imagine) was in his."

Even ſo then at this preſent time alſo there is a Remnant according to the Election of Grace. And if by Grace, then is it no more of Works: otherwiſe Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace: otherwiſe Work is no more Work.

Romans xi. 5, 6.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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For J. MURGATROYD, No. 73, CHISWELL-STREET.

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THE EDITOR TO THE READER.

THE following Sermons were preached near a hundred and twenty years ago; which will account for the ſtile and manner in which they were compoſed and delivered by the worthy Author of them: they were all publiſhed after his death, being taken from him, whilſt preaching them, in ſhort-hand-writing, and compared with his notes, or taken from them. And as they were not deſigned nor prepared for the preſs by the Author, they, no doubt, appeared with leſs accuracy than otherwiſe they would, had

JUN 26 1901

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they been reviſed by him; who, very probably, would have left out ſome things delivered from the pulpit, at leaſt have altered the phraſeology and diction, if not ſome paſſages which needed explanation, and have been ſince matter of controverſy, and for which reaſon, they muſt now be continued. Forty-two of theſe diſcourſes were publiſhed quickly after the death of the author, in the years 1643, 44, 46, in three volumes 12mo. with recommendatory prefaces by Mr. *Robert Lancaſter*, Mr. *George Cokayn*, and Mr. *Henry Pinnel*. In 1690, a new edition of theſe Sermons was printed with an addition of ten more, taken from the Author's notes, by his ſon *Samuel Criſp*, Eſq; this edition is in quarto, and is very incorrect, as well as imperfect, and occaſioned a warm controverſy among ſome worthy good men about ſome points herein advanced; on account of which the learned *Witſius*, profeſſor of divinity at *Utrecht*, a writer often mentioned in the following notes, wrote an *Irenicum*, worthy to be read by both parties. The republication of theſe diſcourſes is not deſigned to revive the controverſy; and the Editor flatters himſelf, that

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that he has, by his notes, explained ſuch phraſes and expreſſions as have been objected to, and ſet them in ſuch a light as to prevent any captious perſon that might be inclined to engage in ſuch work from doing it. In ſhort, the ſole view in republiſhing theſe excellent Sermons, which were wanted, being ſcarce and not eaſy to come at, is the ſame with the pious Author's in preaching them; namely, the relief of diſtreſſed minds and conſciences burdened with a ſenſe of ſin, and ſeeking for deliverance from it; for which theſe diſcourſes are moſt admirably calculated, as has been experienced by thouſands of ſouls; and it may be hoped under a divine bleſſing, that this will be the caſe of every one that reads them with ſuch a view; and for which purpoſe, they are ſincerely and heartily recommended, by

THE EDITOR.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE, &c.

OF

TOBIAS CRISP, D. D.

TOBIAS CRISP deſcended both by father and mother from the richeſt families of the city of *London*, in which they had borne the higheſt offices; he was the third ſon of *Ellis Criſp*, a rich merchant and alderman of the ſaid city, (as his father before him had been) and was ſheriff of the ſame when he died, *Nov.* 13, 1625. Sir *Nicholas Criſp* was the elder brother of *Tobias*, a perſon of great capacity for buſineſs, a rich and induſtrious merchant, was taken notice of at court in the reign of king *Charles* the Iſt, by whom he was knighted, and made one of the farmers of his cuſtoms; he was a famous royaliſt in the times of the civil wars, did much ſervice

Wood's *Athenæ*, vol. II. p. 11, 12

Biographia Brittanica, p. 15,—22, &c.

to

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to the king, and ſuffered much in his cauſe; he was one of the committee ſent by the city of *London* to king *Charles* the IId, at *Breda*, to invite him over, by whom he was received with peculiar marks of affection as his father's old friend; and, upon the king's reſtoration, was re-inſtated into his poſt as one of the farmers of the cuſtoms, and was created a baronet, *April* 16, 1665, and died *Feb.* 26, following.

Tobias was born in *Bread-ſtreet*, *London*, in the year 1600, and had his education for grammar-learning in *Eaton*-ſchool near *Windſor*, and began his academical ſtudies in the univerſity of *Cambridge*, where he continued until he commenced batchelor of arts; and from thence he removed to *Oxford*, for the finiſhing of his ſtudies, and attaining ſome certain parts of learning, and was incorporated a member of *Baliol*-College in *Feb.* 1626. When he received the degree of doctor in divinity is not certain, only it appears, that, upon the breaking out of the civil wars, he had been of ſome years ſtanding in that degree.

Wood's *Athenæ*, Ib.

In the year 1627, and about the 27th year of his age, he became Rector of *Brinkworth* in *Wiltſhire*, where he continued until the time of the civil wars, and was much followed for his edifying way of preaching, and for his great hoſpitality to all perſons that reſorted to his houſe. His way of preaching tended to edification, being ſpiritual and evangelical, and ſuited to the caſe of ſouls made truly

Wood, *Ib.*

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truly ſenſible of ſin: and adapted to their condition, and to the peace and comfort of them, as well as was plain and familiar, and eaſy to be underſtood by thoſe of the meaneſt capacity; as appears by the following diſcourſes, in which he often illuſtrates the deepeſt myſteries of grace by things common among men, and known to all. And, as he had a plentiful eſtate of his own, he was liberal and hoſpitable to ſtrangers that came far and near to attend upon his miniſtry; and, according to good information from ſome of his deſcendants, an hundred perſons, yea, and many more, have been received and entertained in his houſe at one and the ſame time, and ample proviſion made for man and horſe.

He ſet out firſt in the legal way of preaching, in which he was exceeding zealous, and had an earneſt deſire to glorify God in his life and miniſtry; nor did he ſeek for, but refuſed all, worldly advancement, to which his way was open through his parentage and friends; but gave himſelf up wholly to the preaching of the word, and a conſcientious practice of it, and was unblameable in his life and converſation; none being more, and few ſo, conſtant in preaching, praying, repeating ſermons, performing public, family, and private exerciſes, in the ſtrict obſervation of the duties of the Lord's-day: nor did he at all abate, but increaſed, in his zeal for glorifying God in this way, after he had a clearer knowledge of Chriſt, and

Lancaſter's preface to vol. III. of the Dr's ſermons.

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and of the doctrines of grace; working from better principles, and with better views, willing to ſpend, and be ſpent, for the ſervice of the meaneſt of God's people; being far from pride, vanity, and ſelf-conceitedneſs, and full of meekneſs, lowlineſs, and tender-heartedneſs; whereby it appeared, that the goſpel of Chriſt had a very great influence upon his ſoul, and which engaged him to preach it freely without any expectation of worldly advantage, and in a way which was ſure to bring upon him not the credit and eſteem of men, but reproach and perſecution, his doctrine being falſely charged with *Antinomianiſm*: though the innocency, and harmleſſneſs of his life, and his fervency in goodneſs, as Mr. *Lancaſter* obſerves, was a manifeſt practical argument to confute the ſlanders of Satan, againſt the moſt holy faith which he preached. Mr. *Neal* ſays, that the Doctor in his younger days had been a favourer of *Arminianiſm*; but, changing his opinion, he ran into the contrary extreme of *Antinomianiſm*. That he was inclined to *Arminianiſm*, if not in it, and went on in the legal way of preaching for ſome time, is certain; which he relinquiſhed upon a rich experience and clear knowledge of the free grace of God in Chriſt; but, that he went into real *Antinomianiſm*, muſt be denied; his ſermons upon *Free grace the teacher of good works*, and *The uſe of the law*, with others, abundantly prove the contrary. However, the above

Hiſt. of the *Puritans*, vol. iii. p. 38.

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above writer is pleaſed to give this character of him, that "he was certainly a learned and religious perſon, modeſt and humble in his behaviour, fervent and laborious in his miniſterial work, and exact in his morals." Nor does he want the teſtimonies of men of the greateſt figure, in learning and religion, to his character and uſefulneſs; particularly the famous Dr. *Twiſſe*, prolocutor to the aſſembly of divines, and whom ſome have called *Flos ſcholaſticorum*, thus, on occaſion, expreſſed himſelf concerning him; that he "had read Dr. *Criſp*'s ſermons, and could give no reaſon why they were oppoſed, but becauſe ſo many were converted by his preaching, and (ſaid he) ſo few by ours." Mr. *Samuel Criſp*'s preface to Chriſt made ſin, p. 4. That excellent *Dutch* profeſſor of divinity *Hoornbeeck*, calls him a learned divine, and ſays, "*Pervolvi ego tres voluminum libellos* Tobiæ Criſpi, *doct. theologi, quorum titulum fecit*, Chriſt alone exalted;" *Sum. Cont.* p. 702. l. 10. and obſerves, that he, with others of the ſame principles, had no ill deſign, but that the glory of Chriſt might the more appear, caſt down all the works, diſpoſitions, and conditions of men, and confidence in them, beſides him. That truly good man Mr. *Cole*, the author of a valuable treatiſe on *Regeneration*, declared, that if he had but one hundred pounds in the world, and Dr. *Criſp*'s book could not be had without giving fifty pounds for it, he would give it rather than be without it; ſaying, "I have found Mr. *Samuel Criſp*'s preface, *ut ſupra.*

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found more ſatisfaction in it, than in all the books in the world, except the bible."

WHEN the Doctor entered into the marriage-ſtate is not certain; very probably about the time, or before, he became Rector of *Brinkworth*, as ſhould ſeem by the number of children he had, he dying in 1642. He married *Mary Wilſon*, daughter and heireſs of *Rowland Wilſon* of *London*, merchant. She was ſiſter to the famous colonel *Rowland Wilſon*, who was ſo diſtinguiſhed in the times of the civil wars; who, though he was heir to 2000l. *per annum* in land, and partner with his father in a large perſonal eſtate employed in merchandize, yet, for the ſervice of God, and the good of his country, took upon him the command of a city-regiment under the parliament. He was one of the truſtees for the ſale of deans and chapters lands, and muſter-maſter-general of the forces of *Warwick* and *Coventry*; was appointed a commiſſioner of the high-court of juſtice for the trial of the king, but refuſed to act; was member of parliament, and alderman, and ſheriff of the city of *London*; the accepting of which laſt office was voted, by the parliament, an acceptable ſervice to the common-wealth; he was of the council of ſtate for the year 1649, and died quickly after, being attended to his grave by the members of parliament and council of ſtate, the lord-mayor and aldermen, divers citizens of *London*, and officers of the army, the city-regiment, of which he was

Whitelock's memorials, &c. p. 72, 363,—384, 390,—394, 398,—425, 428.

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was colonel, and other companies of ſoldiers. He died before his father, who gave the greateſt part of his ſubſtance to the children of Dr. *Tobias Criſp*, and his widow, who ſurvived the Doctor thirty-one years, ſhe dying the 20th of *Sept.* 1673; by whom he had thirteen children, two died before him, and he left eleven behind him; their names were *Rowland, Ellis, Mary, Tobias, Samuel, Eſther, Edward, Rowland, Nicholas, Elizabeth, Anne, Jane, John.* His ſon *Samuel*, who was one of the governors of *Chriſt-Church*-Hoſpital, *London*, publiſhed the laſt edition of his father's works, with a preface to them; and wrote ſeveral things in defence of them; one called, *Chriſt made ſin;* another, *Chriſt alone exalted* in Dr. *Criſp*'s ſermons; a third, *Chriſt exalted, and Dr.* Criſp *vindicated.* He was one of the firſt that joined in the communion of the church, at *Clapham, Surry*, in the Nonconformiſts way, and the ſurvivor of them all. He died *June* 20th, 1703.

Mr. *Criſp*'s pref. &c. *ut ſupra.*

Mr. *Grace*'s funer. ſermon, p. 41.

But, to return to the Doctor: upon the breaking out of the civil wars, and to avoid the inſolence of the cavalier ſoldiers, he left his rectory of *Brinkworth* in *Aug.* 1642, and retired to *London;* where, and about it, he preached ſeveral of the ſermons afterwards printed; whereby his ſentiments about the doctrines of grace were ſoon diſcovered, in which he was oppoſed by the city-divines; and (to uſe Mr. *Wood*'s words) was baited by fifty-two opponents in a grand diſpute concerning the freeneſs

Athenæ, p. 11.

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freeneſs of the grace of God, in Jeſus Chriſt, to poor ſinners; by which encounter, which was eagerly managed on his part, he contracted a diſeaſe that brought him to his grave. He died of the ſmall-pox, *Feb.* 27th, 1642, being about forty-two years of age, and was buried in a vault, belonging to his family, under part of the church of St. *Mildred*, in *Bread-ſtreet*, *London*.

Lancaſter's pref. &c. ut ſupra.

So, (as Mr. *Lancaſter* ſays) after his natural ſtrength was inſenſibly ſpent, in the ſervice of the Lord, by conſtant and laborious preaching, praying, repeating, and ſtudying, often-times whole nights, to the impairing and ruining of his health, it pleaſed the Lord to call him, by his laſt viſitation, unto his eternal reſt; wherein there appeared ſuch faith, ſuch joy, ſuch a quiet and appeaſed conſcience, ſuch triumph over death and hell, as made the ſtanders-by amazed; and, a little before his death, he profeſſed, before ſome preſent, the ſtedfaſtneſs of his faith, to this effect, "that as he had lived in the free grace of God, through Chriſt, ſo he did, with confidence and great joy, even as much as his preſent condition was capable of, reſign his life and ſoul into the hands of his moſt dear Father."

TO

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TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

TO *ſuch* I recommend a few lines; and if thou art a Chriſtian indeed, then Chriſt is all in all to thee. And though the pure ſtreams of the light, life, and love of God, in Chriſt Jeſus, be moſt ſweet to thee, as they come flowing freſh, as living honey, from the honey-comb, the ſcriptures; yet I know the diſcuſſing divine truths, by thoſe that have had the richeſt experiences of them, will be grateful to you, when you find, that as face anſwers face in a glaſs, ſo theſe following diſcourſes anſwer the heavenly ſenſe and reliſh you have had at any time of the love of Jeſus in your ſoul.

I FIND myſelf ſomewhat concerned to ſay ſomewhat of this new edition, and an addition of my father's Sermons. As thus: I was ſome months ſince ſurprized with a letter from Mr. *Marſhal*, the Undertaker, to reprint all my father's Sermons, in one volume, he deſiring my ſubſcription for

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for a ſet of them. I wondered that ſuch a work ſhould be ſet about by a mere ſtranger, after ſo many years, (about 45,) that they had filled many minds, ſome with admiration, and ſome with contempt of the free grace of God exemplified therein. But, joyful I was, that what had refreſhed many ſouls forty-five years ago, might, through the good hand of God, be of great uſe in theſe days, ſeeing that the Lord Jeſus is haſtening to call all to a ſad account, that ſtand out, and reject his tenders of ſalvation to all that will accept of him.

I CONSIDERING that as the time when theſe Sermons were preached and firſt printed, 1642, and 1643, was as ſad a time as this nation knew for many years. When a violent ſtorm of an outrageous civil war did rage in the bowels of the kingdom. So that every day people looked to be ſlain by the mercileſs ſword: which called for conſolatory diſcourſes for the people of God. Which God eminently aſſiſted my father to preach, with great acceptance to thouſands, that flocked to hear him from place to place, in this great city, twice every Lord's-day, and to his houſe, to the repetition of them at night; until his abundant ſervice therein coſt him his life. He being ſnatched away in the height of his glorifying the free grace of God in Chriſt, to be glorified by it in the midſt of his days, at the age of forty-two, on the 27th of *February*,

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February, 1642. I ſay, as that was a time that theſe diſcourſes were of all times moſt neceſſary, death hanging immediately over the heads of all: ſo now the inculcating this great point, is of as much, if not more uſe; when not only judgment upon all unſound profeſſors is haſtening: but at this latter day of the world, a new goſpel, or a ſort of *Grotian Divinity*, hath obtained among the generality of profeſſors, joining man's righteouſneſs with Chriſt's for ſalvation; and ſaying plainly, our good works concur to our juſtification, directly contrary to the apoſtle, *That by the works of the law ſhall no man be juſtified.* And I forbid any man to ſhew me a good work that is not the work of the law. For if not from God's law, he will ſay, Who required it at your hand? Which conſidered, made me conclude, the republiſhing theſe diſcourſes may comfort and ſettle many ſouls. Whereupon I gladly accepted the Bookſeller's motion to aſſiſt in reprinting them; provided he would add to them ſeveral other Sermons that have not been yet printed, which I would tranſcribe out of my father's own notes: which I deſired him to do on two accounts. Firſt, To ſet forth more of the glorious free grace of God, in what is added. And, ſecondly, To remove ſome reflections caſt on my father's diſcourſes; as if his advancing free grace, tended to ſuppreſs good works, which was far from his, as

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it alſo is from every good Chriſtian's thoughts. For who but a devil, or his children will ſay, *Let us ſin that grace may abound*, or becauſe a good bleſſed Prince hath with the hazard of his life reſcued us from ſlavery, therefore we will ſpit in his face. Therefore to ſhew that my father was not of that ſpirit, I have tranſcribed, from his notes, theſe following diſcourſes, to be printed with his other Sermons, viz. An ample diſcourſe, being the ſubject of ſeveral Sermons, preached at *Brinkworth* (where his lot was caſt) on *Titus* ii. 11, 12. ſhewing therein, *How grace in Chriſt to ſinners teacheth godlineſs, not licentiouſneſs.* Another on *Gal.* iii. 19. on *The uſe of the law.* A third is a funeral Sermon of Mr. *Brunſell*, a miniſter, on *Gal.* i. 8. *Though an angel preach any other doctrine, let him be accurſed.* A ſtrange text for a funeral ſermon; but ſhews, that Mr. *Brunſell*, giving my father that text, was of my Father's opinion, That *Chriſt alone is to be exalted*, notwithſtanding men's carping at the doctrine of free grace. The laſt is the heads of a preparatory Sermon, to the people at *Brinkworth*, to a ſolemn faſt, *July* 8, 1640, which is a ſubject ſo rarely treated on, or practiſed, I concluded, that as it might convince any unprejudiced perſon of my father's ſtrictneſs to the height in holy performances, (yet not making them the main grounds of his comfort) ſo it would be very grateful to thoſe in the miniſtry, who may meet with it, and

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to ſhew how ſtrictly thoſe called Puritans of old, (of whom my father was accounted none of the leaſt) exerciſed themſelves in godlineſs.

Now that theſe are my father's own diſcourſes I full ſatisfy any thus, That I know the hand-writing of theſe diſcourſes are his own hand-writing, (being in his own books, and being the ſame hand that all the former printed Sermons of His are of, and agrees with all the other writings I have of his) as much as I know any man's face I have been long acquainted with. So that I do no more queſtion them to be my father's genuine offspring, than I do that once there was a Queen *Elizabeth* in *England*.

And moreover, in tranſcribing them, moſt of the ſimilies that my father uſed came freſh to mind; they having made a deep impreſſion on my tender memory, when I heard them, being then about ſeven years old; eſpecially the Preparation to a Day of Humiliation. I do as well remember the ſolemnity thereof, forty-nine years ago, as if it had been but laſt year. So that I can, and do teſtify, That they were really (and are faithfully tranſcribed from) his own Notes. Now that they all may be as ſatisfactory to you in peruſing, as theſe laſt have, through God's goodneſs, been to me in tranſcribing, is my hearty deſire.

It doth not comport with common modeſty, nor can it be expected, I ſhould put encomiums

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on theſe diſcourſes, though much may be ſaid of multitudes that have owed, ſome their ſpiritual birth, others their ſoul refreſhments to thoſe Sermons, under God. Neither can I avouch ſo much ſkill in diſputes, as to maintain a ſcholaſtical defence, in oppoſition to the arguments, that ſome, more learned than evangelical ſcholars, have or may raiſe againſt them, as *de guſtu non eſt diſputandum*; ſo neither of the ſoul's ſatisfaction in divine truths. All muſt be left to the Author of all grace, to ſoften ſome, and harden the obſtinate, by thoſe divine teſtimonies of this ſervant of the Lord in the miniſtry. And many hundreds that have taſted that the Lord is gracious, in ſolacing their ſouls with the things tranſmitted here to the world, have been better ſatisfied in the truths of the goſpel, herein laid down, in a plain familiar ſtile, than if they had been averred by the moſt learned arguments of reaſon, from the princes of the world, by human wiſdom only.

I KNOW theſe Sermons have had hard cenſures put on them by ſome perſons of great learning; I wiſh they had better learned Chriſt, then they would not have quarrelled at the honour aſcribed to him by my father. If learning muſt take the upper-hand of divinity, then *Antichriſtian*, *Socinian*, *Pelagian*, *Arminian* doctrines would have joſtled out Chriſtianity long ſince; for who more ſcholaſtically learned than *Antichriſt*'s Doctors, and

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and yet who greater dunces, like *Nicodemus*, in Chriſt's ſchool, where we are to account all our own righteouſneſs, much more our learning, dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of *Jeſus Chriſt*. God will ever make it good, That the poor of the world, for parts and ſelf-excellency, are choſen by him to be rich in faith; while the rich, with their gifts and parts, are moſt of them ſent empty away. For the wiſdom of this world is fooliſhneſs with God, and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, (be his parts never ſo great;) *neither can he know them.* A blind man may as well diſpute of the colours in the rainbow, or the deaf man of ſounds, as the graceleſs ſcholar of the *wiſdom of God in a myſtery which none of the princes of this world knew*; *or of Chriſt in his members their hope of glory.* But I have ſo much charity as to believe, that ſome that have aſperſed theſe Sermons, are perſons of real true piety, and eminently devout; to which it may be ſaid, It is no wonder, when we find many devout ones bandied againſt the apoſtle *Paul*, *Acts* xiii. 15. And there were many true diſciples, believers in Chriſt, that had not ſo much as *heard whether there be a Holy Ghoſt*: *Acts* xix. 1, 2. But bleſſed be God, though ſome four ſpirits were buſy, when theſe Sermons were firſt exhibited to the world: God hath been graciouſly pleaſed to ſend forth many ſons of conſolation ſince, of

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whoſe labours, in the miniſtry, I have been a happy partaker, and whereof I may ſay, that of 5200 diſcourſes I have by me, (beſides many loſt,) taken from the lips of ſeveral goſpel preachers, ſuch as famous Dr. *Goodwin*, Dr. *Owen*, Dr. *Wilkinſon*, Mr. *Chriſtopher Fowler*, that great lover of our Lord Jeſus, and exalter of his righteouſneſs alone in the matter of juſtification, I can ſcarce reckon ſix of the 5200 that do oppoſe the doctrines my father aſſerted.

I CONFESS, I have two preached by an eminent perſon, that I muſt animadvert upon, and thereby in ſome meaſure vindicate my father's Sermons; theſe two were preached at *Pinner's-Hall* the 27th of *January* 1673, and 11th of *Aug.* 1674. This great man treating of ſaints privileges brings in this for one, "That they have the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God. But with this caution, A man's firſt believing is by extrinſical arguments, not by the operation of the Spirit, but his after-believing is by the Spirit." Now if he mean by his firſt believing, only a general aſſent to the truth of the goſpel, I know none will quarrel at it, though it is a very unwary expreſſion; but if he meant ſaving faith comes without the Spirit's operation, I account it an horrid expreſſion. In that of the 11th of *Aug.* he ſaith, "Far be it from thinking Chriſt's righteouſneſs is our formal righteouſneſs. And it is an error (ſaith he) to ſay Chriſt's righteouſneſs

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is ſo perfectly ours, as there is no need of any of our righteouſneſs, in order to our actual or final juſtification," [which is a ſtrange expreſſion for any that would not be reckoned to have the number of the beaſt.] He proceeds concerning our righteouſneſs, exalting it thus, and ſaith, "When it comes to the day of judgment, if we are accuſed at the bar of God to be unbelievers, what will juſtify us? Not Chriſt's righteouſneſs; (*O horrid!*) The queſtion is (ſaith he) If you have part in him, if you are penitent believers; therefore your own faith and repentance muſt be the matter of your juſtification againſt this charge, *Thou art an unbeliever, and impenitent.* If the devil ſay thou art an hypocrite, your ſincerity is your juſtification againſt that." [He proceeded and ſaid,] "Some think we have paid all our debt by *Jeſus Chriſt*, as our repreſentative; this is a miſtake, (ſaith he,) God ſeeing our perſons and his two not the ſame." [Though not one individual perſon, yet the ſcripture ſpeaks nothing more plain and home in its ſenſe, than, That *Chriſt and a believer are one*, *John* xvii. yet he denies it.] Again he affirms, "That he that affirms that God reputes us to have fulfilled the law of works in Chriſt, he maintains the covenant of works, which the ſcripture denies, ſaying, *By the works of the law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified:* Chriſt was juſtified by the law of works, for he fulfilled it perfectly; but this juſtification of him, is not our juſtification."

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juſtification." [Now, who is the *Antinomian?* Is not he that denies Chriſt to have fulfilled the law for believers? and that faith we are not juſtified by the Lord Chriſt's fulfilling the law.] He proceeds, "We muſt have another juſtification beſides the juſtification of the perſon of our Lord Jeſus. If you ſay, God in that ſenſe imputes Chriſt's righteouſneſs, as ſuppoſing us actually perfect, becauſe we fulfilled all in Chriſt, then there is no room for the pardon of ſin." [Here is ſad ſhuffling to balk Chriſt's righteouſneſs made ours; ſure he forgot that ſcripture, *Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus.*] He goes on and ſaith, "The new covenant requires our ſubordinate perſonal righteouſneſs, and Chriſt gives pardon upon this, in ſubordination to Chriſt's righteouſneſs;" [This is not accounting all our righteouſneſs loſs and dung, to be found in Chriſt's righteouſneſs.] [And now comes in a ſquint-eyed maxim, directly contrary to St. *Paul's, Not of works, leſt man ſhould boaſt:* and that is this,] "Grace makes uſe of a *conditional* covenant in a ſapiential way." [O the ſapientiality of man againſt that which the world accounts the fooliſhneſs of God to ſave man, *not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but by his grace he hath ſaved us.*] (Again thus,) "By our perſonal righteouſneſs we are juſtified from the charge of infidelity at the bar of Chriſt." [And could a *Franciſcan Friar* ſay more?]

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more ?] Again, "If men think ſincerity, faith, repentance, have no hand in, or tendency to their *right and title* to eternal life, and juſtification, at the bar of God, they contradict the ſcope of the ſcripture: [But not of that in *Phil.* iii. 9, *That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs.*] Concerning chaſtiſements, which God calls love-tokens, *Heb.* xii. he ſaith, "Where God ſpeaks of chaſtiſements, it is the curſe of puniſhment; (for) when God gave man a Saviour, he intended not to take off all puniſhment." (Again) "It is a miſtake in ſome to ſay, A believer is paſt all danger, when once converted; [though God ſay, Whom he loves, he loves to the end.] And to ſay our union to Chriſt ſo makes us fleſh of his fleſh, that we are the ſame perſon with Chriſt; this is ſo groſs (ſaith he) that I will not beſtow time to confute it:" [Nor cannot, ſo long as that text is in our bibles, *We are members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones, Eph.* v.] "We are his members, but it is political members," ſaid he. [But God ſaith, *He that is joined to the Lord, is one ſpirit;* which is more than a political member, or a natural member either.] I ſhall not make quotations upon what follows, but leave them to the enſuing learned anſwers; but he proceeded with theſe paſſages, "Another miſtake is, That every man ſhall be juſtified, that doth but believe he is juſtified. I that have ſpent many

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many years in hard ſtudy of words, do now confeſs, that moſt of the doctrinal diſputes in *Chriſtendom*, nay, with Papiſts, lie in words; and for ſaying ſo, I ſhall be cenſured. He that hath but ſkill to unravel the words, may make them confeſs they mean both the ſame thing. He that blaſphemes God in words, may be a good Chriſtian in his heart; his error may be more grammatical than theological. [For a cloſe take this,] "We miſtake our propriety in Chriſt, and his merits; we have not that propriety in Chriſt that we have in our goods, or as I have in my beaſt, to diſpoſe of him."

Thus the captain of thoſe that oppoſe ſuch doctrines, as are in the following Sermons, leads many; but ſure it cannot but grieve all that have any ſenſe of the love of Chriſt, to die for us, and to ſee how his righteouſneſs is baffled, and, in a manner, diſcharged from juſtifying a poor ſinner. How ſhould our zeal for Chriſt inflame us to hear a Doctor in *Iſrael* ſay, That at the laſt day Chriſt's righteouſneſs doth not juſtify us? But there is a righteouſneſs of ours comes in, in ſome ſort, in order to our actual, or final juſtification. Now I will intreat the reader to accept my pains in tranſcribing ſome paſſages preached in anſwer to this ſermon, and which vindicates the doctrine of free grace, by the ſtrenuous exalters of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs made ours, Mr. *Criſtopher Fowler*, deceaſed, and

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and Mr. *Thomas Cole*, through God's rich mercy yet living to defend the truth. I begin with Mr. *Fowler*'s, preached *Aug.* 13, 1674, two days after he had heard, and told me he was ſick of that ſermon of *Aug.* 11, from *Cant.* ii. 16, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his. Take us the foxes,* ſaith *ver.* 15. "Theſe are falſe teachers, they adulterated the doctrine of juſtification in St. *Paul*'s time, and ſo they continue. (*Aug.* 11.) The devil knows, take away the foundation, and the building falls; but every common man is not to be a ſoldier," (ſo ſaid *Aug.* 11.) "But there was a proclamation in 88, that all from ſixteen to ſixty ſhould be in arms; nature will teach a man to leave the plough, and take arms to defend his country: and love to Chriſt will make men contend for the truth, when men are pulling up the foundations. I would fain know what the truth means, if we are patiently to let it go. St. *Jude* bids us, *Contend for the faith once delivered to the ſaints: many deceivers are come into the world.* Suppoſe a man comes and patcheth up the righteouſneſs of man, with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, for juſtification; what ſhall we do then? The apoſtle ſaith, *Bid him not God-ſpeed.* To withdraw from ſuch is God's ordinance; that they may be aſhamed. It is a duty to abhor and hate ſuch doctrines. I do not ſay I hate their perſons, I pray for them, and that God would pluck up every plant that is not of our heavenly Father's planting,

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planting. O! but is it not better for men to be quiet? (as ſaid *Aug.* 11.) What! Muſt men poiſon the doctrine of Jeſus Chriſt, and miniſters hold their tongues for fear of being counted contentious? Shall a man be called a bawler, becauſe he cries, Fire, fire? If the ſame opinions riſe up as did of old, the ſame courſe muſt be taken to cut them off. Men talk of being quiet, What! Shall the maſter of the houſe lie and ſleep, and let the thief alone when he comes to rob? My maſtiff muſt have a muzzle put on him, till all the poultry be ſtolen. A man muſt not cut down the thiſtles, leſt his neighbours count him troubleſome. What makes men deny the alone righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt for juſtification? they never received the truth in the love of it. *My Beloved is mine*; there is a righteouſneſs without us. *I am his*; there is holineſs within us. Can you read this text, *Jeſus is mine, and I am his*, and not ſay, We have no righteouſneſs to ſtand before God in, but Chriſt's imputed to us? What an idle conceit is that (of *Aug.* 11?) That I and Chriſt are not the ſame individual perſons? Is not Chriſt's righteouſneſs completely mine, becauſe I was not in his body perſonally when he died? Did not Chriſt Jeſus perform all righteouſneſs for his church? When ſoul and body are united, *Adam*'s ſin is mine: ſo when I being touched with a ſenſe of ſin and hell, do believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and apply him to my ſoul, his righte-

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righteouſneſs is mine, and I am perſonally juſtified. A virtual juſtification, is none, (ſaid *Aug.* 11.) What man living can ſay ſo? If there were no virtual juſtification, (when Chriſt ſatisfied, which was denied *Aug.* 11.) there would be no actual. For my part, I think people do not underſtand, and they ſwallow any thing. If a man ſay, that virtual juſtification is no juſtification, they let it go down: I will make it plain by a familiar inſtance; My father it may be borrows 10,000l. before I am born, and binds himſelf and children that he ſhall have, and becomes not able to pay a groat, nor any of his children: there comes a friend and lays down the whole ſum, for the redemption of him, and his, from miſery. This is not told me till I am of age, then I plead this payment, or I muſt lie in goal. So Chriſt made the payment of the debt I ran into in *Adam*, long before I was born. Now I am virtually juſtified; and when I come to own and plead this, I am actually juſtified. But people fight againſt this imputed righteouſneſs, while the ſcripture is plain for it. When St. *Paul* ſaith, *God imputes righteouſneſs*, he means the thing, not the virtue." What nonſenſe is it for men to talk of virtual juſtification, no juſtification, "The thing, Chriſt's righteouſneſs, is imputed to me, and for the virtue of it, that in time is effected in me, there the ſenſe of being juſtified by Chriſt's righteouſneſs imputed, is, that Chriſt is the meritorious

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ritorious cauſe that we, doing ſo and ſo, ſhall be juſtified. If that be all, it is falſe; for Chriſt's righteouſneſs is the material cauſe of our juſtification alſo. I explain it thus: Suppoſe I am arreſted, and brought before my Lord Mayor, at *Guildhall*, for a debt of 1000l. and I muſt rot in goal if I do not pay every farthing; there comes a friend and depoſited all this money for me; but ſo, that if I will be diſcharged, I muſt accept of this payment, and plead it at the bar. And when I plead it, the judge acquits me, and ſaith, Sir, the court diſcharges you. Now what is the matter or thing that diſcharges me? It is the payment of the ſurety which ſatisfies the law. But what is the formal diſcharge? How comes the judge actually to diſcharge me? It is by imputing and reckoning this payment of my friend to me. The council ſaith, On what ground do you diſcharge this great debtor? Why, ſaith he, his ſurety paid it for him; and I reckon what he did to the account of the debtor, and ſo diſcharge him. This is imputation. The money depoſited by my ſurety, is the matter. The imputing this to me, is my formal diſcharge in the court. A material diſcharge this was before I plead it; the payment of the money was worthy that I ſhould be diſcharged, and it is the matter alſo of my diſcharge: but till I plead this, and ſay, My Lord, I confeſs the debt, but my friend paid it for me; pray diſcharge me. Till then I am

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not formally discharged. My Lord saith, I reckon his payment to you, and the court discharges you: this is common among men. This debt is a debt of punishment, to be inflicted by God, a righteous judge, for sin; the bar is the law; what is my answer at this bar? Guilty, guilty, my Lord. What is my plea, why I should not go to hell? I plead Jesus, what he hath done and suffered for me; I plead his righteousness, believing in him. Now God imputes this, and I am justified. This is the meaning of justification, according to all our reformed divines; why should people name one or two otherwise minded, that afterwards *Socinianized*, and turned towards *Popery*, the main thing still all along hath been to prove against the *Papists*, *Socinians*, and *Arminians*, that Christ's righteousness is the material cause of our justification. Bishop *Davenant* saith, *Christ's righteousness is the material cause of our justification, and the meritorious too.* So saith *Chamier;* so say all our learned divines at home and abroad. God will not justify a man without a righteousness. Now the great question is, What is that righteousness that is the matter of my justification? To this the *Arminian* saith, God imputes faith the *το credere*, the act of faith; God sees me believe, and God imputes that act of mine for my justification. *John Goodwin* saith plainly, *God accepts this act of faith for as much as a man's performing the whole law.* The *Papists* say, *The matter, or material cause of justification,*

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fication, or that for which God accounts a man righteous, it is our good works joined with Christ's righteousness. God imputes my alms, my prayer, and the like, for my righteousness. Ask the *Socinian* what is the material cause of justification? He will tell you, It is my faith joined with a good life. So they all three jostle out Christ's righteousness. They will not submit to the righteousness of God, but go about to establish their own righteousness, *Rom.* x. But come now to a true *Protestant*; and what doth he say? What is his righteousness before God? Or, what is the material cause of his justification? He cries out, *None but Christ, none but the righteousness of Christ; that I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith.* He trusts only in *Jehovah* his righteousness. He cries out, with the spouse in the text, *My Beloved is mine;* he himself, his person, his righteousness is mine." (But the 11th of *Aug.* said, *Christ's doing all for us, would be a justification, by the covenant of works.*) Mr. *Fowler* saith, "Nothing can stand in the court of heaven to justify me, but what is adequate to the law of God. *Do this, and live,* is alive; either I must do the will of God, or somebody for me; if not, the law will curse me to hell: for, *Heaven and earth must pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law, till all be fulfilled* by me, or my surety for me, else I shall never go to heaven. Sincere obedience will not do in point of

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of juſtification, it is accepted of God in Chriſt, as the fruit of juſtifying faith; it is the honour of a Chriſtian, and where it is right, it is worth ten thouſand worlds: but, by your leave, it is not Jeſus Chriſt, it is not our righteouſneſs to ſtand before God in, at his tribunal bar. I admire we muſt take ſuch pains to prove the ſun ſhines, to prove that Chriſt's righteouſneſs is our juſtification; and yet we are forced to it: methinks that text, *Col.* i. 22. ſhould ſtop every mouth, *You hath he reconciled in the body of his fleſh through death.* What is the fruit? *To preſent you in his ſight holy.* How far? It may be to be ſincere. Is not that enough? No: it is *holy and unreproveable in his ſight;* not in man's ſight, but in God's ſight. How? By my ſincerity? No, but by *the body of his fleſh through death.* Compare this with that of *David, Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant; for in thy ſight ſhall no fleſh living be juſtified;* that is, no ſervant living, no *Abraham,* no *David,* no *Paul,* no *Virgin Mary,* ſhall ſtand juſtified in his or her ſincere obedience in God's ſight. *Savanarola,* a Popiſh monk, afterwards a martyr, 1498, profeſſed, *That the goſpel of Chriſt was puddled by the ſchoolmen, mingling* Ariſtotle *and* Plato *with* Chriſt *and* Paul; *they tell us of works before grace, and after grace, of a firſt and ſecond juſtification.* Away with this nonſenſe, the text is plain, *no ſervant is juſtified in God's ſight:* a man is not a ſervant (but the enemy) till in a juſtified ſtate by faith;

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faith; and yet then this ſervant cannot ſtand in God's ſight, with any thing of his own, or any thing received, but only in the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, yet we ſtand unblameable in God's ſight. How? It is by *the body of his fleſh through death* he preſents us ſo; but if we are ſecure by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, then, *Paul*, you deſtroy all duties, men may live as they liſt. No, no; I beſeech you therefore by the mercies of God *to preſent your bodies holy*, &c. This is *Paul*'s logic, from an argument of mercy in Jeſus Chriſt, to perſuade them to holineſs; and I like his logic before all the diſtinctions of the ſchoolmen. As for imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to his ſeed, it is as the imputation of *Adam's* ſin to his ſeed, *Rom.* v. Through *the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation.*

"The *Arminian* will ſay, God imputes the act of our faith for our righteouſneſs. The *Papiſts* are for God's imputing alms, prayers, &c. for our righteouſneſs. The *Arminian* will tell you, Faith is *Cauſa ſine qua non*, a juggle: no imputation is good. But when *Proteſtants*, and true believers ſay they truſt only in Chriſt's righteouſneſs imputed to them for juſtification, this muſt be called a new fangled doctrine."

Thus Mr. *Fowler* bears witneſs againſt our righteouſneſs having an order in our juſtification: but farther to refute it, I ſhall give in a ſecond evidence, that by the mouth of two witneſſes

neſſes the truth of Chriſt alone our righteouſneſs may be eſtabliſhed; and that is ſome paſſages out of Mr. *Cole*'s ſermon, preached in Dr. *Owen*'s turn at *Pinner's-Hall*, *Aug.* 8, 1676, from *Matt.* vii. 24 to 27, about the ſound foundation: "They ſay (ſaid Mr. *Cole*) that to complete our juſtification, Chriſt hath purchaſed for us ſtrength and ability to perform the condition of the new covenant, the performance of which is to be taken in as part of our juſtification. We ſay, Faith and obedience once proved to be true and genuine, are good evidences of our intereſt in Chriſt, whoſe imputed righteouſneſs is the ſole and only righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified from all charge and blame whatever, in the ſight of God; and to ſay otherwiſe is in effect to ſay, That Chriſt died to juſtify us, that we might be juſtified without him; our inherent righteouſneſs can have no part in our juſtification, becauſe there muſt be a change of our ſtate by juſtification, before we can derive any ſaving grace from Chriſt, to enable us to do the leaſt good work. Now our inherent righteouſneſs not being able to juſtify itſelf, becauſe of its imperfection, much leſs can it juſtify our perſons: I ſhall ſhew, that the work of faith, as done by us, is no part of our righteouſneſs. It is true, the ſcripture ſaith, *Faith is imputed for righteouſneſs, and that we are juſtified by faith:* now in what ſenſe is this to be underſtood? Are we to take up our ſtanding, partly in

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the act of faith, and partly in the object of faith; making up a righteouſneſs, partly from ourſelves, and partly from Chriſt? Or, are we by faith to go out of ourſelves to Chriſt, for our whole ſole juſtifying righteouſneſs? This I affirm, and ſhall ſhew, that thoſe ſcriptures, of being juſtified by faith, do relate to the object of faith, to Chriſt believed on; faith is a relative, it is πιστευειν εις εν επι; to believe in, into, upon Jeſus Chriſt. It muſt be faith in Chriſt, or in nothing; believing is our leaning on Chriſt. We are not united to faith, but by faith to Chriſt; we do not truſt in faith, but by faith in Chriſt: when we are ſaid to be juſtified by faith on Chriſt, *Gal.* ii. 16. can the meaning be, that we are juſtified by faith and Chriſt, as ſome would have it? Were men more willing to exalt Chriſt, and debaſe themſelves, faith in Chriſt would be but one righteouſneſs, and would not be faith and hriſt.

"HATH God ſaid, *Chriſt is our righteouſneſs*, without any reſtriction, and ſhall man ſay, Ay, but not all our righteouſneſs? I ſay, it is a bold word, whatever remote inference they may gather from the ſcripture, to juſtify their meaning: and ſince God hath not thought fit to drop any ſuch diminutive expreſſion of Chriſt in ſcripture, I ſay, it is a bold word for men to ſpeak ſo; we may ſafely deny any thing of God which tends to weakneſs, but to deny that of Chriſt which tends

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tends to the exaltation of his name, and the riches of his grace, let men diſtinguiſh how they will, it is dangerous meddling here, this is a tender point. To make the act of faith to juſtify us, and *not* Chriſt the object of faith, makes faith contradict itſelf, as thus: Pray what is the ſenſe of a believing ſoul, under his preſent act of faith in Jeſus Chriſt? I appeal to you all, who have been ſeriouſly dealing with God by an act of faith for ſalvation: you believe in Chriſt; what is the Engliſh of that? is not this the ſenſe? You deſire to caſt *yourſelf* wholly on Chriſt, to be found in Chriſt, not having on your own righteouſneſs, to lay hold of eternal life in Chriſt, to go out of yourſelves to Chriſt, for righteouſneſs and life, to count all loſs and dung, that you may win Chriſt. If you mean this, what an abſurdity is it to ſay, I am juſtified by ſomewhat in myſelf, by virtue of that act of faith, by which I go out of myſelf to Chriſt for all; if this is reaſon and ſenſe, I have quite loſt the uſe of both. But how do ſome men (as *Aug.* 11.) fight with their own ſhadows, loſe themſelves in their own expreſſions; they cannot ſpeak of Chriſt, and of the way, and manner of applying Chriſt, but preſently they muſt be co-workers with Chriſt in their juſtification. Brethren, We muſt not be perſuded out of our own Chriſtian names, nay, out of Chriſtianity itſelf, by thoſe who would impoſe their own notions on us, and indeed preach *another goſpel.* If

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Paul were alone, and ſhould hear any man on earth, or angel in heaven, compound faith and works, works and Chriſt in the matter of juſtification, I doubt not but he would curſe them in the name of the Lord. Certainly we are not to be mealy-mouthed, and ſilently to ſuffer the grand principles of the goſpel to be denied: theſe be the pillars of the houſe, all falls if theſe be taken away.

"I SHALL ſhew the reaſons they go on, who differ from us. They ſpeak much of a charge of infidelity, and impenitency, to be drawn up againſt us at the laſt day, therefore it concerns us to muſter up all our good works, to anſwer the charge. A ſpecious argument to amuſe the world, and to fright men to the *Popiſh juſtification* by works, to talk of a charge of indictment againſt a believer at the laſt day, is a groundleſs and unſcriptural notion." (So *Aug.* 11.) "I conceive the laſt judgment is not to prove who is, and who is not in a ſtate of grace; but rather, to pronounce the ſtate that every one ſhall appear in at the reſurrection: there will be no doubting of any man's ſtate then, the method of the reſurrection will decide that. Chriſt will ſeparate *the ſheep from the goats*.. And he will do this before the judgment, *Matt.* xxv. You ſhall know a believer then, by his ſtation on the right-hand of Chriſt; and, muſt they then come under a charge of infidelity? Who muſt draw up this

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this charge, either God, good angels, conſcience, or the devil? God hath juſtified them here, and ſealed them by his ſpirit of adoption, to the day of redemption, and he will not reverſe his judgment. Good angels they gathered up the elect, and they know who they are; conſcience is ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, and the devil hath ſomewhat elſe to do at that day, the time of his torment being come. Fear him not; for the apoſtle ſaith, *The laſt enemy is death*, and muſt we have an after-rencounter with the devil? He draw up a charge againſt you? You ſhall accuſe, judge, and condemn him, 1 *Cor.* vi. 3. Muſt poor Chriſtians, that have lived under Satan's buffetings, be raiſed ſo? Is this to be raiſed in power? Or, was *Paul* out in his triumphs? *Rom.* viii. 33, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* Make good your title to Chriſt now, and never fear any charge at that day. *John* v. 24, *They ſhall not enter into judgment.* Ay, but if this feigned proceſs be not obſerved, ſome men's notions will fall to the ground. Ay, and let them fall, it is no matter how ſoon, for they are not grounded on the word of God. We muſt not draw ſham models from our own brains, and then impoſe them on God.

"The ſecond ground they go on is this, That righteouſneſs is a conditional ſervice, impoſed by God in the new covenant, and therefore the performance of it muſt be part of our juſtification, which

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which is ſpecious and ſuitable to human reaſon; as moſt things are that contradict the myſtery of the goſpel. But alas! at how little a hole will ſelf creep in, to have ſomewhat to glory in; I grant to believe in Chriſt is a great act of divine worſhip, the greateſt we can perform to God on this ſide heaven; but I deny that faith procures the benefits from Chriſt, but faith receives what Chriſt hath already procured: faith does not deſire Chriſt to die for us, but faith comes for the fruit of his death, but hath no cauſality, or efficiency. If coming to Chriſt for what he hath done for us be a ſervice, it is a ſervice done to a man's ſelf, and can never be urged as a ſervice done to God. The meaning of an act of faith is to renounce our own righteouſneſs, to come in our nakedneſs and poverty to Chriſt, without money, or money's worth; this is the old, honeſt, plain, downright notion of believing. And is this the conditional ſervice required. Why do not you do it then, and lie low before God, and be vile in your own eyes, and caſt yourſelf on Chriſt for all? Is this to perform the condition of believing, to tell the world, that Chriſt is not our only juſtifying righteouſneſs? that we muſt ſeek for ſomewhat in ourſelves to join with him. Sirs, let us not read the Bible backwards, wreſting ſcriptures to our own deſtruction. It is ſtrange to me, that faith, which is all along in ſcripture oppoſed to works in juſtification, and is appointed

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of God, to ſhut all good works out of juſtification, ſhould be thus made an inlet to bring all good works into juſtification. They urge *Matt.* xii. 37, *By thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified.* But *Maldonate*, the Jeſuit owns, This text is only of a juſtification, which declares us righteous.

"AFTER all diſputes, I ſay to you, brethren, what St. *Paul* ſaid to the gaoler, *Acts* xvi. 31. that I ſay to you all, *Believe in the Lord Jeſus, and thou, and thine houſe ſhall be ſaved;* and do not you go home and tell your families now, that they muſt not underſtand this text ſo, as to look upon Chriſt as their only juſtifying righteouſneſs, but they muſt look for ſomewhat in themſelves, if ever they would be ſaved. (As ſaid *Aug.* 11.) No, pray ſpeak ſcripture language, expound ſcripture by ſcripture, and tell them, that Chriſt is all in all; tell them plainly, *They muſt not be found in their own righteouſneſs, they muſt be found in Chriſt, not having on their own righteouſneſs;* tell them, There is no other *name under heaven by which they can be ſaved, but by the name of Chriſt*; tell them, *They muſt not come for juſtification and life in the name of their good works, or of any thing that belongs to themſelves.* Promote this doctrine in your families, this is the way to ſave you, and your houſhold; this is good wholeſome houſhold divinity, and ſuited to the ordinary capacity of all ſerious profeſſors; we muſt not ſend our hearers to intricate diſtinctions for the meaning of juſtification, the ſenſe of the goſpel

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goſpel is plain in this thing. Come, come, you ſhall never be charged at the laſt day, for giving too much to Chriſt in the matter of juſtification; you are to aſcribe all to him, and, if it were poſſible to err on that hand, I had rather err in giving too much, than too little to Chriſt. For uſe to thoſe that ground their juſtification on the ſandy foundation of their own inherent righteouſneſs, I would exhort them to pull down the houſe preſently, before it falls on their heads, and lay a better foundation; and then I would preſs them to ſtudy other arguments, as there are very many to promote good works, and practical holineſs, and not joſtle out Chriſt, to make room for ſelf-righteouſneſs in the matter of juſtification. To thoſe that are built on the right foundation, and have caſt themſelves on Chriſt's righteouſneſs for juſtification to life, let ſuch be careful to maintain good works, and bring forth fruit meet for the kingdom of God."

THUS this ſervant of the Lord hath taken excellent pains, to undeceive people from what was impoſed on them *Aug.* 11, 74, and ſo far juſtifies my father's Sermons, in that point of free juſtification by Chriſt only. And becauſe ſo great a man made that ſermon, the 11th of *Aug.* I have collected the teſtimony of many eminent divines, *Vim vi repellere*, all contending againſt the mixture of our righteouſneſs with Chriſt's in the matter

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ter of juſtification, but intend here to give the reader only two or three of them.

From the doctrine of the Church of *England* contained in the Homilies, and out of the famous Dr. *Reynolds*'s Excellency of Chriſt.

In folio 17, of the Homilies, it runs thus, "I ſay juſtification is the office of God; man cannot make himſelf righteous in part, or in whole, by his own works; that were the greateſt arrogancy that man can ſet up againſt God." [Lo here the good old doctrine of Proteſtants; but he goes on yet more bravely, againſt the jumbling of man's righteouſneſs with Chriſt; againſt man's having ſome order in the juſtification of a ſinner.] "So that to be juſtified by faith *only*, [mark that *only*] is not that this our act of faith, in Chriſt, doth juſtify us, and deſerve our juſtification, for that were to account ourſelves juſtified by ſome act, or virtue that is within us; but the meaning is, That although we hear God's word, and believe it; though we have faith, hope, charity and repentance, the dread and fear of God within us, and do never ſo many works thereupon; yet we muſt renounce the merits of all our ſaid virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and truſt only in God's mercy, and in that ſacrifice which our High Prieſt once offered upon the croſs." And in folio 18, thus, "As great and as godly a virtue as lively faith is, yet it putteth us from itſelf, and remitteth us unto Chriſt,

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to have only [only, only,] from him, remiſſion of our ſins, or juſtification." [Lo here no mingling ſanctification with juſtification.] But Dr. *Reynolds* goes farther; and by ſome ſemi-Arminians would be accounted an Antinomian; though they are the greateſt Antinomians that deny, *The moral law to be fulfilled in every tittle, by Chriſt, for believers.* The Doctor ſaith in folio 336, "In one place God commands, *Make you a new heart*; in another he ſaith, *A new heart will I give you.* How can theſe things conſiſt together; he commands us to do what he promiſeth to do himſelf; but only to ſhew, God gives what he requires?" [But this was greatly laboured againſt *Aug.* 11.] In folio 352, "We muſt live by faith, not by reaſon." And folio 368, "The doctrine of juſtification by faith in Chriſt, was oppoſed by the Jews, which kept them from Chriſtianity. They would mingle the law with juſtification, as the Papiſts do on other reaſons." [And much like it *Aug.* 11. but he goes on and abſolutely confirms, our very ſins being laid on Chriſt; much ſtruck at *Aug.* 11.] Folio 529, "The apoſtle ſaith, That he was made ſin for us; to note, that not only our perſons were, in God's account, crucified with him to juſtification; but that ſin itſelf did hang on his croſs to mortification." [Nay he aſſerts an incorporation into Chriſt's body: whereas *Aug.* 11. denied *Chriſt's righteouſneſs to be ſo much a believer's as his*

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leaſt is.] And ſaith, folio 442, "When once we are incorporated into Chriſt's body, though we are ſtill under the law's conduct, in regard of its obedience, which is made ſweet and eaſy by grace; yet not under the law's malediction." [So that he makes union to Chriſt, more than union to the Church, as ſome will have it. And ſaith farther,] folio 443, "The faith of the patriarchs is expreſs by embracing; they did not only claſp Chriſt, but he them again. So that the ſtrength of faith, takes in the ſtrength of Chriſt, being it puts Chriſt into a man." [Nay he *ventures* to be called an Antinomian, but it is only one of St. *Paul*'s order; and ſaith concerning our ſins not being able to reverſe God's mercy, as follows;] folio 448, "The ſins of men can no more utterly cancel, or reverſe God's covenant of mercy, than bring back the flood. God makes us do the thing he requires; as *Auguſtin*, *Deus facit, ut nos faciamus quæ præcipit.* [And whereas *Aug.* 11. denied believers to be ſo one with Chriſt, as to ſuffer with him; he ſaith,] folio 451, "Whatever he really in his human nature ſuffered for ſin, we are in moderated juſtice reputed to have ſuffered with him, *As truly as the hand that ſteals is puniſhed when the back is beaten*, *Rom.* vi. 6. *Gal.* vi. 14. And ſurely if a man was crucified with Chriſt, he was crucified as Chriſt, for all ſin, which ſhould otherwiſe have lain on him." [He moſt ſweetly diſpels many of

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of thoſe clouds, which the 11th of *Aug.* raiſed in the city, and the puddle of *Arminianiſh* brains, by which they do darken the world. This long paragraph, which, for the comfort of the Chriſtian Reader, and for eſtabliſhing the doctrine of free grace, I quote at length from folio 453 and 454.] "The ſum of all (ſaith he) is this, We ſtand not, like *Adam*, upon our own bottom, but are branches of ſuch a vine as never withers, members of ſuch a head as never dies, ſharers in ſuch a ſpirit as cleanſeth health, and purifies the heart, partakers of ſuch promiſes as are ſealed by the oath of God, ſince we live *not by our own life*, but by the life of Chriſt; are not led or ſealed by our own ſpirit, but by the Spirit of Chriſt; ſtand not reconciled to God by our own endeavours, but by the propitiation wrought by Chriſt, who loved us when enemies, and in our blood; who is both willing and able to ſave us to the uttermoſt, and preſerve his own mercies in us; to whoſe office it belongs to take order, that none that are given him be loſt. Undoubtedly that life of Chriſt in us, which is thus underpropped, though it be not privileged from temptation, no, nor from backſliding, yet it is an abiding life," (notwithſtanding its being queſtioned, *Aug.* 11.) Folio 468, "His merits are as fully imputed to us for juſtification, as if his ſufferings had been by us endured, or the debt by us ſatisfied; he alone, without any demerit of his, ſuffered our (our, our) puniſh-

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puniſhment. *Solus pro nobis ſuſcepit penam* Aug. *Illa in corpore Chriſti vulnera, non erant Chriſti vulnera, ſed latronis: The wounds in the body of Chriſt, were not Chriſt's wounds, but the thief's.*" [This is driving the nail through the temples of *Siſera*, the captain of the enemy's hoſt. Let us keep on this rock, and we ſhall not be ſhaken with Popiſh blaſts.] Folio 479, he puts a queſtion, "*How do we live by faith*, Heb. x. *and by Chriſt?* John xiv. By Chriſt, as the fountain; by faith, as the pipe." And folio 480, "If Chriſt, ſtand unblameable before God's juſtice, we ſhall *in him* (mark this *in him*) appear ſo to faith, as a work of the heart. *το credere* doth not juſtify, but as it is a taking hold of Chriſt, not by working, but bare receiving." Folio 483, "If the Lord propoſe righteouſneſs, or ſalvation, to a man, on condition of his moral obedience, man's corruptions are ſo many, that the promiſes cannot be ſure to him on the *concurrence* of his own works; but when there is nothing required of a man, but to cleave to Chriſt, this muſt needs make our righteouſneſs, and ſalvation, as certain as is the value of the merits on which you rely." [If this be not ſound evangelical doctrine, then I have heard the moſt eminent miniſters of the goſpel to little purpoſe, theſe fifty years.] He goes on richly, folio 489, "Faith re-inveſts a man with the creatures. *All are yours.* Faith gives us all things, by entitling to the promiſes." Folio 495, "Chriſt is himſelf

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himſelf the righteouſneſs of thoſe that believe." Folio 510, "If the firſt love of God to man was not procured by Chriſt, as mediator, but was altogether abſolute, much leſs doth the love of God ground itſelf on any thing in us. The whole ſeries of our ſalvation is made up without reſpect to any (any, any) thing of ours, or from us." [What not any thing? What will become of all ſelf-righteouſneſs then? Why it muſt go to the apoſtle *Paul*'s dunghill, *Phil.* iii. 8. If it would have to do in juſtification. If this do not vindicate Dr. *Criſp*'s Sermons, I know not what can.] He proceeds in folio 512, and 513, "In the new covenant God works firſt, and when he bids us come to him, he doth likewiſe draw us to him; our faith is the operation of God, that which he requires of us, he beſtows on us. The firſt work of God is ſpiritual teaching; we come to Chriſt as the child to the mother, who draws him nearer and nearer as ſhe calls him; the Spirit firſt opens the eye, and then the word."

Thus this eminent Dr. *Reynolds*, who confirms the tenor of my father's diſcourſes, *That the ſins of the elect do not hinder the operation of God's grace.* Inſomuch, that if a ſinner be wrought on by God, in the midſt of his ſins, he lays hold on Chriſt for righteouſneſs and life, by faith in him. This is Chriſt's firſt drawing, and the ſoul may freely adventure all the treaſure of his ſalvation in this veſſel, without any ſcruple; not that this doth open

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open any gap to licentiouſneſs more than caſting a rope to a drowning man to catch hold on, encourages him to fly in the face of him that caſt it out.

WHAT ſhall I more ſay? The time would fail me to tell you of *Gideon*, *Barak*, *Sampſon*, of *Cole*, 1633, of *Pemble*, 1627, of *Wilſon*, 1614, of *Gouge*, 1616, of *Powel*, 1606, of *Sutton*, 1632, of Biſhop *Cooper*, 1629, of *Armagh*, 1658, and famous *Perkins*, of whom I muſt ſay one word, he being ſo nervous; who treating of the errors of the *Papiſts*, ſaith quite contrary to what was taught the 11th of *Aug.* viz. folio 32, "The form of juſtification is as it were a kind of tranſlation of the believers ſins upon Chriſt." And again, "Chriſt's righteouſneſs to the believer by a reciprocal or mutual imputation."

IN folio 101, he quotes the *Papiſt*'s error in theſe words: "Infuſed or inherent juſtice is the formal cauſe of juſtification, whereby men are juſtified in the ſight of God formally."——The confutation; We do contrarily hold (ſaith *Perkins*) "that the material cauſe of man's juſtification, is the obedience of Chriſt, in ſuffering, and fulfilling the law for us; but as for the formal cauſe, that muſt needs be imputation, the which is an action of God the Father accepting the obedience of Chriſt for us, as if it were our own."

Objection,

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Objection, " *If juſtification be by imputation, he may be juſt before God, who indeed is a wicked man.*"

Anſwer, " Not ſo: for he that is once by imputation juſtified, is alſo at the ſame inſtant ſanctified. The Popiſh device of a ſecond juſtification is a ſatanical deluſion."

[But the 11th of *Aug.* ſaid, *There remains puniſhments on believers in afflictions*, &c. but Mr. *Perkins* clean contrary,] folio 368, " The benefit of juſtification is, That he is perfectly reconciled to God, becauſe his ſin is done away, and he is arrayed with the perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and afflictions to the faithful are no puniſhments for ſin; for the guilt and puniſhment of ſin was borne by Chriſt. And if a Chriſtian be afflicted, it is no puniſhment; for then God ſhould puniſh one fault twice, once in Chriſt, and the ſecond time in the Chriſtian; which thing doth not agree with his juſtice." In folio 567, " Juſtification ſtands in two things, remiſſion of ſins by the merit of Chriſt, and the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, whereby God accounts that righteouſneſs which is in Chriſt, as the righteouſneſs of that ſinner which believes in him." [And againſt the concurrence of our ſanctification he ſaith,] folio 572, " The meaning is, That nothing that man can do, either by nature or by grace, concurreth to the act of juſtification before God, as any cauſe thereof, neither efficient, material, formal,

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formal, or final, but faith alone. And folio 650, "Faith is no principal cauſe, but only an inſtrument. Faith is no inſtrument to procure, or work out our juſtification and ſalvation, but an inſtrument to receive our juſtification, given by the Father, procured by the Son, applied by the Holy Ghoſt." (In Mr. *Perkins*'s ſecond part he mauls the Popiſh juſtification, and cramps the 11th of *Aug.* ſaying, in folio 205,) "It may be demanded, What is that thing in Chriſt, by, and for which we are juſtified? I anſwer, The obedience of Chriſt, *Rom.* v. 19. (folio 229,) Imputed to us of God, and apprehended by faith. (And folio 276,) The Papiſt erreth, which teacheth juſtification, partly by remiſſion of ſins, and partly by that which we call inward ſanctification. (And folio 165,) Here it muſt be obſerved, that they which make an union of grace and works in the cauſe of juſtification, are ſeparated from the grace of God." [This dreadful thunderbolt, formed out of *Gal.* v. 4, will make ſad work. It lights on the conſcience of ſome *Grotian* divines.] [But Mr. *Perkins*, to make ſure work againſt the *Papiſts*, ſhoots them with an arrow out of their own bow, and with it hits others that would paſs for good *Proteſtants*, and quotes a rank *Papiſt*, *Albertus Pighius*, in theſe words,] "If we (ſaith *Pighius*) ſpeak properly and formally, we are not juſtified by our own faith, nor charity, but by the *only* juſtice of God in Chriſt.

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'That *only* juſtice of God in Chriſt communicated to us."

HERE we may ſee how God ſometimes extorts great things out of the mouth of an enemy, as out of *Balaam*'s: ſo *Bellarmine's Tutiſſimus, The ſafeſt way is to rely on Chriſt alone:* ſo burning *Wincheſter* in Queen *Mary*'s days, when dying, and exhorted to fly to Chriſt alone for ſalvation, agreed to it; but ſaid, *This door muſt not be opened too freely; it would make the people leave them:* or to that purpoſe. I muſt now confeſs I have ſomewhat tranſgreſſed the bounds of a preface, and ſhould think it needed an apology, but that it is chiefly enlarged with ſound quotations, which cannot but be an excellent entertainment to the judicious Chriſtian, and a good help, through grace, to make others judicious. I ſhould have diſmiſſed the reader here with a brief concluſion, but that in peruſing ſome notes, I met with a very evangelic diſcourſe of that worthy ſervant of the Lord, now with God, Dr. *Jacomb*, preached at *Pinner's-Hall*, the 8th of *March* 1680-1, ſweetly according with my father's publiſhing God's offers of grace to the worſt of ſinners, when they are in the height of their ſins. This gentleman being ſo eminent in the city for a ſolid, ſound teacher, his free expreſſions of the grace of God will reconcile many of that perſuaſion that he was of, to the like freedom in my father's diſcourſes; and therefore I ſhall be the more

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more free in giving the reader the larger parcel thereof. As follows:

Dr. *Jacomb, March* 8, 1680, on *Hoſea* ii. 14. "*Therefore I will allure her*—This *therefore* muſt have a wherefore, *She went after her lovers; therefore I will allure her.* The good and gracious God, doth ſometimes make uſe of ſin itſelf, to cauſe grace to ſhine out more conſpicuouſly. Thou haſt done ſo and ſo, *and I will magnify my mercy to thee;* to ſee if this will break thy heart: as the beſt things, Chriſt and the goſpel, by accident, have evil effects on evil hearts; ſo the worſt of things, ſin, by accident, ſometimes produceth good. It is the uſual way of God to the greateſt ſinners, be their ſins never ſo many and great, *Ezek.* xvi. *Thou haſt deſpiſed the covenant;* yet after all this, ver. 60, God ſaith, *I will remember my covenant with thee.* So in *Pſalm* cvi. *Our fathers did wickedly, notwithſtanding he ſaved them for his name's ſake.* The apoſtle ſaith, *I was a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, but I obtained mercy,* 1 *Tim.* i. 23. though I did it ſhutting mine eyes againſt the light; there never was a perſon brought into God, but God paſſed by a thouſand of *buts.* The obſervation. The gracious God ſometimes doth take occaſion, from the ſins of a people, to ſhew his grace: *She went after her lovers;* ſhe forgot me. Well but, ſaith God, I will take my riſe for mercy from hence; *Therefore I will allure her.* What a great ſin was that of *Adam!* yet God

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took his riſe from that, to act the higheſt grace that ever was acted in the world; he entered into a new covenant with man, to ſend Chriſt into the world; *that where ſin abounds, grace might much more abound;* to illuſtrate and magnify his mercy, and goodneſs. It is ſtrange to conſider, that, from which one would think God would infer nothing but judgment, he infers nothing but mercy; as in the text, and *Gen.* viii. 24. God ſaid, *I will not again curſe the ground; for the imagination of man's heart is evil.* What a ſtrange *for* is this? One would think it to be, I will curſe the ground, *for* the imagination of man's heart is evil. So in *Eſa.* lv. 17, *For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs I was wroth, and he went on frowardly.* What dreadful words follow? None, but quite otherwiſe: *I have ſeen his ways, and will heal him: Eſa.* xliii. 24, *Thou haſt brought me no ſweet cane; but haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins:* will not God be angry now? No; the next words are, *I am he that blot out thy tranſgreſſions, for my own name ſake.* It is a ſtrange argument, that of *David, Pſalm* xxv. 11, *Pardon my ſin, for it is great.* Holy *David* knew, that God ſometimes takes occaſion from the greatneſs of our ſins to pardon them; to illuſtrate the greatneſs of his mercy. God deſigns in all things, the advancing of all his attributes; they being all equally dear to him: but if there be a difference, God eſpecially aims at glorifying his mercy. When he would give

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Moſes a ſight of his glory, he gives him a ſight of his goodneſs, *the Lord, gracious and merciful, Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. His grace is prerogative grace; he hath mercy on whom he will; and ſometimes he is pleaſed to pitch on the moſt unlikely perſons, the worſt of ſinners; there is a heighth and depth in his grace; and there is a freeneſs in it. *When ſinners deſerve the leaſt, and look for the leaſt,* [This is juſt my father's ſenſe] *God is pleaſed to give out the moſt grace to ſuch as look for leaſt.* The greater the ſin, the more conſpicuous is the freeneſs of the grace of God. Sinners are not firſt with God; but God is firſt with them in his grace: he firſt loves us, and then we love him. God will have his preventing grace known, and therefore ſometimes takes the ſinner when he is at the worſt." [To this may ſome *Semi-Arminian* ſay, That Dr. *Jacomb* is as much an *Antinomian,* as Dr. *C*—. though, in truth, he is only one of the apoſtle *Paul*'s *Antinomians*; who ſaith, *Where ſin abounds, grace doth* ſuperabound, *much more abound;* and the righteouſneſs of God without the law was manifeſt. But the Doctor proceeds,] "O, ſaith God, here is a people very bad, ſtark naught as can be; and ſo will continue for ever, if I let them alone, and do not begin with them; I will therefore prevent them, and begin with acts of mercy." [No, ſaith the half *Arminian,* you muſt not venture on God for mercy,

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mercy, till you have humbled yourſelf, and are fit for mercy.]

" For uſe. This calls on us not to think better of ſin, but higher of God. *She went after her lovers; therefore I will allure her.* What a wonder is this; to fill heaven and earth with admiration of God's grace? That God, notwithſtanding ſin, ſhould be gracious, is admirable; but to take his riſe from the occaſion of ſin, that is more. Well may he annex, *A Behold, O ſtand and wonder that a people ſhould deal ſo with me, and I ſhould be gracious to them!* How often, when we have been ſinning againſt God, even then hath the Lord pitied, and glorified his mercy to us? God might have ſaid, *Therefore I will caſt thee into hell flames.* But God hath ſaid, *Therefore I will pity.* This may invite ſinners to fly to God for mercy; becauſe then when a people is ſinning againſt him, that is his time, ſometimes to ſhew mercy. What will he do when a people fly to him, and lie at his feet? It may be your ſins are many and great, attended with ſad aggravations; and you have, it may be, ſad thoughts of yourſelves; O be not afraid." [Some Legaliſts would have ſaid, O you muſt be afraid; or caſt down to the brink of hell, and mourn a long time, and when you find your heart ſoft and tender, and that you have thoroughly waſhed your ſoul in penitential tears, and have cleanſed your heart from the love and liking of every ſin, then be not afraid. But without this

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this ſelf righteouſneſs, the good Doctor, like the good *Samaritan*, pours in the wine and oil; and ſaith, *When you are in your ſin, attended with great aggravations, be not afraid or caſt down.*] "But, in the way of faith and repentance, look up to God, and hope for mercy and grace. Sin is thy burthen: that which is the ground of thy fear, may, as God orders things, be a ground of comfort; by making it an occaſion to manifeſt his grace. You may ſay, *There is no hope*, as *Jer.* ii. 25. What, no hope! God forbid. Let thy ſins be what they will, come but to this God, lie at his feet, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt; plead for mercy, and there is hope. He that ſometimes takes advantage from the greatneſs of thy ſin, he will not ſlight thee, when in the way of duty. And let me tell you, as to this poor nation; if we be ſaved, it muſt be on this account *therefore*. It is not their faſting, their praying, their humbling themſelves, *therefore I will ſave;* but, *they go after their lovers, therefore I will ſave* England, *for my name's ſake.* If *England* be ſaved it muſt be from the Lord's prerogative ſovereign grace. You have ſtubborn relations, that ſin againſt God with a high hand; wait and pray, God may take advantage from their ſin, to glorify his mercy. This *therefore* in the text is a pattern act of grace; ſo the apoſtle, *I obtained mercy, that I might be a pattern.* So this *therefore I will allure her*, is to encourage the faith and hope of the people of God

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in all ages. But let none abuſe this precious truth, as you love God, and your own ſouls, do not *continue in ſin, becauſe grace abounds*, *Rom.* vi. 3. Though God ſometimes takes occaſion, from your ſin, to heighten his mercy, you muſt not take occaſion from God's mercy to heighten your ſin. This ſkilful Phyſician can make the worſt poiſon ſanative; ſhall we therefore take poiſon? that is madneſs."

THUS this ſolid ſound diſpenſer of the word of God, who was never looked upon to be an *Antinomian*, thus, I ſay, the worthy Dr. *Jacomb* aſſerted the free grace of God to ſinners, in the worſt and higheſt ſins, to be capable of mercy and pardon. And what doth my father ſay? or can any ſay more for the honour of free grace. *Therefore to him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins, in his blood, be honour and glory for ever.*

I CANNOT omit ſo famous a teſtimony againſt *Arminian* divinity, as that of eminent Dr. *Manton*'s, at *Pinner's-Hall*, the 3d of *October*, 1676, from this text, 1 *John* v. 12, *He that hath the Son hath life*——" Thirdly, (ſaith he) I come to confirm the connexion. The having life depends on having Chriſt; firſt, becauſe Chriſt is the firſt gift in order to ſalvation. [The grand expreſſion of my father's, that ſome cannot digeſt.] Therefore before ſpiritual life we muſt have Chriſt. Chriſt is offered in the goſpel to be joined to us, and with him pardon, reconciliation, ſanctification

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tion, and glory; therefore till we be poſſeſſed of Chriſt, we cannot be poſſeſſed of his benefits: members receive life from the head, and branches from the ſtock.

"FIRST, The *perſon* is joined, and then comes grace, when we are paſſed into each other's right. It is firſt, *I am my Beloved's*, then *he is mine*, *Cant.* ii. 16. Chriſt firſt gives himſelf, then all things. You muſt be brought to ſpecial relation to the perſon of Chriſt, before you can claim benefits. As in the natural body the ſpirits are from the head conveyed to other parts, ſo the Spirit of Chriſt works in us, as members of Chriſt, by virtue of union to him; the Spirit not coming immediately from the divine nature of the Father, or of the Son, but from Chriſt, as God, man, mediator, and his glorified humanity is the great means to convey it to us." [Which dwelling of the Spirit in believers, is by ſome evaporated into *only* the graces of his ſpirit, not his perſon.] "One ſpirit (ſaith the Doctor) dwells in him, and in us; the ſame ſpirit is in us, as is in him, to ſhew that Chriſt is not only a political head, as ſome fancy, but a head of influence, and gives life, and motion."

Objection, "*How can we have Chriſt before life, ſince faith, which is an act of life, receives Chriſt?*"

Anſwer, "Chriſt makes his firſt entry to the heart by his Spirit, and by the power of the word he brings them to believe this is the Father's drawing,

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drawing, *John* vi. 44, or quickening the dead, *Eph.* ii. 1. The apoſtle calls it, *Chriſt's apprehending us*, Phil. iii. 12, *That I may apprehend him, of whom I am apprehended.* Chriſt firſt lays hold on us in effectual calling, when dead in ſin." [And what if he had ſaid, *Reeking in ſin*, as *Paul* was.]

Now I ſhall conclude, after I have given a note or two from a ſcripture, ſuitable to the calling God ſet me in; which is, *Matt.* xiii. 45, *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant, ſeeking goodly pearls, who when he had found one pearl of great price,* (πολυτιμον,) *he went and ſold all that he had, and bought it. That this pearl is our Lord Jeſus* none queſtions; but this ſelling all for him is much queſtioned, though not by thoſe that find him. The *Papiſt*, *Socinian*, and *Arminian*, apprehending ſome excellency in themſelves, they will be wiſe merchants indeed, but make God a very ſilly one; they will barter with God, and give him their rotten rags, their dung-righteouſneſs for his pearl, and eternal glory, and ſo put a cheat upon the all-wiſe God; but he will not be mocked. But the truly wiſe merchant conſiders how richly he was ſet up, God making him upright in *Adam*, but the ſubtle broker, the devil, deceived him, and he wilfully threw away his ſtock upon the ſerpent's ſuggeſtion, for the ſhadows of knowledge of good and evil. He ſees the longer he trades upon his own ſkill, the more bankrupt he is; and for all the vaſt debt he

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he owes, he hath nothing to pay God his great creditor, but a warehouſe full of counterfeit, rotten, decayed filth, fit only for the dunghill. At length this dreadfully bewildered merchant hears of a wonderful pearl dropped from the heavenly *Indies*, offered to ſuch poor broken merchants as will accept him without money, or money's worth, *Eſa.* lv. He being raviſhed with the glorious radiancy thereof, ſhining with *Diaphonon*'s tranſlucency into his heart, wooing and beſeeching him in his blood-ſhed on the croſs to accept him; this merchant, by the all-conquering power *of the Spirit*, is brought to ſee into what a wretched condition he hath brought himſelf, by feeding on the poiſoned drugs of his own works, and clothing himſelf with the filthy rags, the ſpider's webs he ſpun out of his own bowels. He having found this πολυτιμον pearl, the pearl having firſt found him, (*we loving him, becauſe he loved us firſt,*) he ſells all, he parts with all, he renounces all his whole ſtock, *accounting all loſs and dung for Chriſt*, Phil. iii. 9. As he buys without money or price, ſo he ſells without money or price; he lays all his ſins upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; that is, he ſees by faith the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, and now gives up himſelf to be accepted in the Beloved, his ſins to be pardoned in Chriſt's blood, his ſervices to be firſt waſhed, then accepted in the ſame juſtifying blood, and righteouſneſs of Jeſus. Thus having parted

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parted with all, he now, upon the goſpel terms, buys this πολυτιμον μαργαριτην; that is, comes to Jeſus, receives Jeſus, believes in Jeſus, as his alone treaſure, riches, ſtore, life, righteouſneſs, beauty, wiſdom, ſtrength, and all, in him, to him, for him. This pearl now makes him a man again, with this pearl he pays all his debts, he anſwers the law in all its demands, only by ſhewing that this great, good pearl is his; he now is free from all arreſts in his conſcience, he comes to the *Exchange* (to communion with God) again, he hath credit now into all countries, eſpecially in the heavenly *Indies*, whither, by virtue of this pearl, he draws his bills of exchange every poſt day, that is, morning and evening, and at all times, by faith and prayer, where his bills have good acceptance, and always, when need is, they are paid at ſight, with gracious tokens of love and favour. Now this merchant drives a full tumbling trade, his pearl whitherſoever he turns it, turns all into grace and glory, he himſelf being changed from glory to glory by the ſpirit of the Lord. This I take to be ſelling all for this pearl, as the apoſtle did, *Phil.* iii. 8, 9.

But ſome will be cavilling; What horrid boldneſs is it for any, when he is reeking in ſin, to lay hold on Chriſt, upon his call? But if ſuch were in the condition that a nephew of mine was in, that fell from the ſhip into the ſea,

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ſea, when the ſhip was ſailing, he would ſay otherwiſe. If the maſter of the veſſel ſhould caſt out a rope, for him to catch at, to ſave himſelf; would he ſay, Sir, I am not worthy? I fell overboard when I was ſmeared with pitch and tar: I am not clean enough to come on board again: ſure all the world would think ſuch an one mad. And is it madneſs not to accept of a temporal deliverance upon an idle conceit; I am not worthy of it? And is it not much more madneſs, not to accept the Lord Jeſus, and ſalvation by him, becauſe we are full of ſin? Methinks all ſhould conclude we are under the greater neceſſity to fly for refuge to him. For preaching which doctrine, my dear father was maligned by ſome, when living. Though God ſupported him wonderfully, even to his dying moment, in the lively ſenſe of God's being moſt glorified, in the higheſt exaltations of his freeſt grace to the worſt of ſinners. Inſomuch, that a few moments before his departure out of this world, he ſpake to friends, by his bed-ſide, *Where are all thoſe that diſpute againſt the free grace of God, and what I have taught thereof? I am now ready to anſwer them all:* and ſo fell aſleep. *He that hath ears to hear let him hear.* So reſts

S. C.

CLAPHAM,
October 28, 1689.

To

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To all thoſe that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and embrace the Word of his Free Grace; eſpecially to the faithful Hearers of that heavenly AMBASSADOR of Chriſt, Dr. CRISP, Grace and Peace be multiplied.

AS in all things (beloved brethren) the provident care of the Lord Chriſt is manifeſted toward you his people, whoſe eye of faith he hath opened; ſo eſpecially in ſending this faithful *man of God* among you, *who came in the abundance of the bleſſing of the goſpel of Chriſt*; the very prints of the footſteps of the Lord's grace and favour are moſt conſpicuous. For as the Lord foreſaw, that you were to meet with more than ordinary ſtraits and difficulties in theſe ſad times; ſo it pleaſed his goodneſs, to afford a more than ordinary ſupport, to eſtabliſh the hearts of his people; that they might not fear to ſink in, or be ſwallowed up by thoſe billows that threaten continually to overflow them.

Now

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Now there is none, I ſuppoſe, that is in any meaſure of truth, acquainted with the *terrors of God*, but he muſt needs confeſs, That the one thing that is neceſſary to effect this eſtabliſhment of the ſoul from all diſtracting and diſtruſtful cares and fears, muſt needs be the *aſſurance* of *peace* and *reconciliation* with God. For whilſt God is looked upon as an enemy, what can there be but a continual fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to conſume his adverſaries; ſeeing our God is a conſuming fire? *Heb.* xii. 29. For if the eſtate was ſo dreadful, which *Moſes* threatened to the *Iſraelites*, when he told them, *They ſhould have juſt cauſe of fear, both day and night, becauſe they ſhould have no aſſurance of their lives*, Deut. xxviii. 66. How much more terrible muſt it needs be, when we not only carry this temporal life in our hands every moment; but alſo there is no aſſurance, but that *the pale horſe, on which death rideth, hath hell following after him*, Rev. vi. 8. and ſo there is no aſſurance of eternal life? This muſt needs be *juſt cauſe*, with a witneſs, *to fear both day and night*. Except therefore the ſoul be tranſlated from under the dominion of the *king of fears*, and *peace* and *reconciliation* fully and freely manifeſted; the heart muſt needs (eſpecially in ſuch times as theſe, wherein it is continually called upon, *Where is thy reſt?*) be overwhelmed with horror and diſtraction.

THAT

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THAT therefore the Lord's people might have an impregnable rampire, and ſure repoſe; that they might have a city to dwell in, whereunto *the Lord hath made ſalvation itſelf, to be for walls and bulwarks*, Eſa. xxvi. 1. Therefore hath the Lord ſent the glorious word of his free grace, in the mouth of this meſſenger of peace among you, creating the fruit of his lips to be peace, I think I may truly ſay unto thouſands, both of them that were afar off in profaneneſs, and to them that were near, in legal profeſſion. For this free grace that is ſet at nought, and ſeldom mentioned by many builders, but with reproach; the Lord will make the chief of the corner, and lay it with joy and ſhouting of thoſe that embrace it, though it ſhall be for a ſtone of ſtumbling to the adverſaries thereof. This free grace laid forth in the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt freely beſtowed, is that only thing that is able to make us ſtand with confidence, both in all the troubles of this life, and alſo before the tribunal ſeat of God, even in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment; when all the righteouſneſs of our own works will vaniſh away as the morning dew; wherein the great apoſtle deſired not to be found, *Phil.* iii. 9. Although he had a meaſure of it, far above the ſtricteſt in theſe times: yea, there is nothing but the precious blood-ſhed of the Son of God, that was able to deliver us from that damnation, which the

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the beſt of our own works and righteouſneſs do daily and hourly deſerve. So that to think to reſt here, is to ſleep upon the top of a maſt, where every puff of wind is ready to caſt a man into the bottom of the ſea. And ſurely, notwithſtanding their pretended deep humiliations, they ſeem never to have been truly acquainted with the *terrors of God*, who dare appear before him in their imperfect, and therefore ſinful ſanctification and duties. For if the Lord God ran upon his only beloved Son like a lion, with ſuch fury and indignation, when he was but wrapt in our iniquities, that he cried out in a moſt ſtrange and lamentable manner, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Oh then, how ſhould we dare to look upon him, or come into his preſence, in our own dung and rags, covering ourſelves with our own confuſion as with a cloak: *For if this was done to the green tree, what ſhall be done to the dry?* Luke xxiii. 31.

But yet although in regard of our own works, even the beſt of them, we have juſt cauſe to lay our lips in the duſt for evermore: yet, in regard of this *free grace* of God, being operative in his *free chuſing*, in his *free juſtifying* and *ſaving us*, not only, not for, but *not ſo much as according to the works of righteouſneſs which we have done*, 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. iii. 5. There is juſt matter of joy and exultation, and even of ſtrong conſolation, to them that fly unto the throne of grace; which

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hath been ſo faithfully, ſo evidently, and purely ſet forth unto you by this glorious inſtrument of Chriſt, that your hearts can teſtify, you were led forth by the waters of comfort, whilſt others wandered in a wilderneſs by the waters of *Marah*; that you enjoyed a feaſt of fat things, whilſt others ſat in *Egypt* under their taſk maſters, with their leeks and onions. And this the Lord was pleaſed to manifeſt unto you, that ye might not go heavily in theſe heavy and ſad times, wherein men are at their wits end: but that *ye might lift up your heads*, becauſe the full manifeſtation of your redemption draweth near; that ye might with perfect boldneſs, even unto a triumph, not only look in the face, but trample upon the moſt terrible of all your enemies, ſin, death, Satan, and hell itſelf, through the great and glorious conqueſt of the Captain of our ſalvation: for God, our Father, by this grace alone, hath not only delivered us from this preſent evil world, but alſo tranſlated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, and made us freely meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light.

It is true indeed, brethren, the *Prince of darkneſs* cannot but exceedingly repine and fret, to ſee a ſtronger than he thus bind him, and releaſe his priſoners, and vindicate his captives into ſo glorious a liberty. And therefore doth he beſtir himſelf, with all deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, to retain not only the profane, that are

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are deſtitute of the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, but eſpecially thoſe that have a form of godlineſs in ſtrict and religious walking, who yet deny in effect the goſpel of free grace, which is the power thereof, becauſe *it is the mighty power of God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth*, Rom. i. 16. Hence come thoſe ſlanderous and calumnious imputations of *Antinomianiſm*, and *Libertiniſm*, in doctrine; and of looſeneſs, and licentiouſneſs in converſation; which vile ſlanders have been often caſt, both upon this faithful witneſs of the Lord, and the embracers of that doctrine. Whereunto we muſt needs anſwer in the Lord's words, Zech. iii. 2, *The Lord rebuke thee, Satan, even the Lord that hath choſen Jeruſalem, rebuke thee; are not we as brands plucked out of the fire?* And in the words of the apoſtle, *Wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the ſtreight ways of the Lord?* Acts xiii. 10.

For was he, or are we indeed *Antionomiſts*, enemies to the law? God forbid. Nay, we never were, we never could be truly friends with it, until it pleaſed the Lord to diſcover unto us *the words of this life*. The law looked upon us as an enemy, ſhaking over us continually the rod of God's indignation, ſcourging and piercing our ſouls and conſciences with ſcorpions, with menaces, with curſes, with terrible and auſtere exactions, and that we had no ſtrength. How then could we look upon it, but as upon a moſt bitter

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and implacable adverſary? *But after the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour appeared, who not according to the works of righteouſneſs that we have done, but according to his mercy hath ſaved us. After the Lord Jeſus had taken the hand-writing that was againſt us, and nailed it to his croſs,* and exhibited a full ſatisfaction to all the law could demand of us, or lay to our charge; this only was able to ſettle us in an *everlaſting peace,* and *reconcilement* with the law. Right reckoning, men ſay, makes long friends; but when the creditor and debtor not only agree in their accounts, but alſo the debtor is able to produce a full acquittance for the uttermoſt farthing that was due, there can be no breach, no jarring between them. The caſe is ours, (everlaſting praiſe and thanks be rendered unto the Lord our righteouſneſs,) our acquittance is recorded every where in the word of his grace; *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth,* Rom. x. 4. *Wherefore we are become dead to the law by the body of Chriſt, and delivered from the law,* Rom. vii. 4, 6. *So that the Lord will remember our ſins and iniquities no more,* Heb. viii. 12. *For we are not under the law, but under grace,* Rom. vi. 12. which is the moſt conſtant doctrine of that apoſtle: it is alſo ſealed unto us by the blood of our Redeemer, in as much as the *New Teſtament of grace is in force by the death of the Teſtator,* Heb. ix. 16, 17.

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But let them take heed of the juſt charge of *Antinomianiſm*, who when the law requireth a perfect fulfilling, and continuing in all things, *Gal.* iii. 10. will make it content with lame, imperfect performances; nay, it muſt *accept the will for the deed*, rather than they will be beholden for a full and free acceptance of wills and deeds, and all, unto the beloved of the Lord, in whom the ſoul of the Lord is well-pleaſed, and the faithful are freely accepted. Is not this to fruſtrate and make void the very end of a bond, to make it content with ſome few farthings, when ſo many thouſands were due? Let them alſo take heed they be not guilty of *Antinomianiſm*, who take and leave what of the law they ſee good; who cut off the curſe, the rigour, and all the puniſhment of it, at one blow. Surely it is not ſafe to ſeparate what God hath joined, without good warrant from him. The apoſtle affirmeth, That *whatſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under it.* He ſaith not ſomething, but all *whatſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under it.* So that there is never a curſe in the law, which it doth not pronounce upon the head of him that is under it.

And our Saviour himſelf ſaith, That *heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but one jot or tittle of the law ſhall not paſs away, till all be fulfilled*, Matt. v. 8. Surely the curſes are as much as one jot or tittle. He that ſhould deny unto the laws of

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England the power to puniſh ſuch offenders as are under them, might juſtly be thought and called an enemy to, and a deſtroyer of the laws of the land. But as for us, we make not void the law through faith, but eſtabliſh it: we affirm that it remaineth in its full force and power, not only of commanding, but alſo of exacting, of terrifying, of curſing, and puniſhing every ſon of *Adam* that is under it, without the abatement of the leaſt jot or tittle. And whether this be *Antinomianiſm* or no, let the church of Chriſt conſider, and judge by the word of Chriſt.

THE next imputation they caſt upon this faithful Miniſter of Chriſt, and upon his doctrine, and his hearers, was that of *Libertiniſm*, whereby if they mean that doctrine which *Calvin* charges the *Libertines* withal, in his book againſt them, we may moſt truly ſay, it never entered into the heart of this Author to embrace it, much leſs into his mouth to publiſh it. And if any hold, or ſpread any ſuch horrid aſſertions, we do utterly diſclaim them, they are none of us: we are as far, or farther from them, than the ſevereſt of thoſe that labour to faſten this imputation upon us. But if they mean by *Libertiniſm* the preaching of the *free grace in Chriſt*, (even to them that have no worthineſs to procure it, no goodneſs or diſpoſitions to qualify them for it,) *whereby the priſoners are brought out*

of

of the priſon houſe, and the captives ſet at liberty, with that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, that we ſhould not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage, Gal. v. 1. *which neither we, nor our fathers were able to bear*, Acts xv. 10. Which, in a word, is freedom *from ſin*, which is true liberty not to ſin, for then it were ſlavery. If any teachers in *Iſrael* call this *Libertiniſm*, then are we ſorry that they whoſe chief or only commiſſion is to preach this goſpel of the kingdom, (which only bringeth ſalvation to them and their hearers, if they be ſaved) to the effecting this liberty in the conſciences of the people, that ſo they might be helpers of their joy, ſhould ſo far fruſtrate the end of the Father's ſending his Son into the world, deſcribed *Luke* iv. 18, 19. as to caſt upon it ſuch vile, reproachful, and blaſphemous aſperſions. But as for us, the comfort of this doctrine is our crown and portion for ever; for which we cannot ceaſe but bleſs the Lord night and day.

He that ſaith this doctrine teacheth licentiouſneſs, we are ſure he is a ſtranger to it, and never felt the power of it in his own heart: for can any thing elſe effectually *teach to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, but this grace of God appearing?* Tit. ii. 11, 12. Can any man truly *find and prize this pearl of the kingdom, and not ſell all that was of high eſteem with him before?* Matt. xiii. 46. Is there any other reaſon why we love God, but

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but becauſe he hath ſo freely and abundantly *loved us firſt?* 1 John iv. 19. Doth not love manifeſted, as truly and infallibly kindle love again, as fire kindleth fire; *Cant.* viii. 6. Nay, rather the want of the more full and pure, and powerful preaching of the free grace of Chriſt, is the very root and ground of the continuance, in all ſenſuality and profaneneſs, in thoſe that are notoriouſly wicked. For what can men do but catch at ſhadows and appearances of good, ſuch as honours, and pleaſures, and profits, and tranſgreſs for a morſel of bread, whilſt they know not the glory of their own durable riches and righteouſneſs, whilſt the true ſubſtance is abſent or covered, whilſt Chriſt and his benefits are ſeldom, and coldly, and darkly propoſed? It is the true cauſe alſo of all unbelief, ſelf-love, and ſlaviſh fear in *legal profeſſors*, and of all the evil fruits that ſpring from theſe roots of bitterneſs. For how can they believe, when they do not hear this *free grace* preached, but rather reviled and ſlandered? How can they ceaſe from ſelf-love, and ſeeking their own things, whilſt they ſee not how infinitely, how all-ſufficiently they are beloved of God their Father in Chriſt? And how can they be otherwiſe, but continually inveſted with ſlaviſh fear, when they are kept under by the ſpirit of bondage, when they may not dare for fear of preſumption, to be aſſured of God's *free love*, and joyfully to apply Chriſt and his benefits unto them

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themſelves, from whom the Spirit of Adoption cometh, whereby we cry *Abba Father?* Or if this aſſurance be allowed, it is upon ſuch hard and high terms, that men muſt bring ſo much goodneſs to Chriſt, before they muſt dare to partake of him; that if a man will deal faithfully with himſelf, and not make *lies his refuge*, by making himſelf better than he is; he muſt needs be enforced to renounce all claim unto Chriſt, and to live in horror and deſpair all his days. Yea, the chief, or only cauſe of the weak and inordinate walking of the profeſſors of the goſpel, is not becauſe they have received the doctrine of *free grace*; (as the devil labours to make men believe,) but becauſe they have not received it ſo fully, ſo freely, and ſo abundantly, as it is plentifully held forth unto them in the word of the goſpel. In a word, we intreat all thoſe that are poſſeſſed with this groundleſs fear, that the preaching of *free grace* opens a way unto licentiouſneſs, ſeriouſly to conſider how contrary the divine reaſon of the apoſtle, *Rom.* vi. 14. is unto their carnal reaſon, when he affirmeth that the cauſe why *ſin ſhall not have dominion over us*; that is, why we ſhall not run out into all licentiouſneſs, is, *Becauſe we are not under the law, but under grace.* The prudence and wiſdom of man thinks quite contrary, that if men be not under the law, if they be not bridled, reſtrained, and kept in by the law, they muſt needs run into all

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all uncleanneſs with greedineſs: but let God be true, and every man a liar; let the fooliſhneſs of God be wiſer than men. He needs no inſtructor or counſellor to teach him how effectually to work upon men; for *he knows what is in man*, John ii. 25.

So much for his doctrine; his life was in all things anſwerable to the honour and credit of the goſpel, notwithſtanding all thoſe falſe and venomous ſlanders which ſome have made, and others have loved to hear and diſperſe; who have juſt cauſe to conſider, that which the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, That *without are* not only *dogs and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and idolaters*, but alſo *whoſoever loveth and maketh a lie*, Rev. xxii. 15. For even before he was acquainted with the full purity of the goſpel, whilſt he went on in the ordinary legal way, he had an earneſt deſire and endeavour to glorify God, both in his life and doctrine, being adverſe unto, and refuſing all worldly pomp, and advancements (whereunto he had an open door by the heighth of his parentage and friends) which others ſo unſatiably hunted after, with open mouths; and wholly dedicating himſelf to the preaching of the word, and to a ſincere and conſcientious practice of the ſame: ſo that he was altogether unblameable in his converſation, without the leaſt tincture of any juſt imputation of viciouſneſs among men: none being more, and few

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ſo conſtant in preaching, in praying, in repeating, in performing public, family, and private exerciſes, in ſtrict obſervation of the duties of the Lord's day. And thus much *concerning his converſation in times paſt knew all* they among whom he lived, *how that in this way he profited above his equals*, (as the apoſtle ſaith of himſelf) *being more exceeding zealous*, Gal. i. 13, 14.

And after it pleaſed God, who had called him by his grace, to reveal his Son in him more clearly; he was ſo far from abating any part of his *zeal* of glorifying the Lord, that he rather doubled it, working now out of a more effectual principle than the *ſpirit of bondage and fear* could be, even *the ſpirit of power and love, and of a ſound mind*, 2 Tim. i. 7. Rejoicing to ſpend and to be ſpent, if he might be but ſerviceable to the meaneſt of God's people. So far was he from pride, vanity, and ſelf-conceitedneſs, the very bane of theſe times, and ſo full of meekneſs, lowlineſs, and tender-heartedneſs, that it appeared manifeſtly the goſpel of Chriſt had had a mighty influence, and operation upon him to the caſting down of every high thought. Yea, he was ſo raviſhed with the love of Chriſt, and thereby with an earneſt, free, and ſolicitous care of advancing his name, that he ſeemed to regard nothing beſides, preaching the word *freely*, where there could be no expectation of advantage;

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tage; and in such a way, as instead of credit, he could look for nothing but revilings and persecution, wherein some proceeded so far as not to allow him a little learning: a plain testimony, they have not gone so far in true mortification, and a vile esteem of themselves, as they would have the world believe. Human learning is a mean thing for a minister of the gospel to boast of. The great Doctor of the Gentiles laid it under his feet, in comparison to the knowledge of Christ, desiring to know among God's people, *nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified:* yet was he not in any thing inferior to the very chiefest, though in his own esteem he was nothing. And I doubt not but there is written such a testimonial of his learning in your hearts, as few others can produce; if the Holy Ghost by the Prophet *Esaiah* may be judge of learning, *The Lord God,* saith he, *hath given me the tongue of the learned,* what is that? *That I should know how to speak a word in due season to him that is weary,* Isaiah l. 4. O how many weary spirits did the Lord by his ministry revive! Surely, if this be *learning,* the Lord gave him no ordinary measure. And indeed his whole life was so innocent and harmless from all evil, so zealous and fervent in all goodness, that it seems to be set forth as a manifest practical argument, to confute the slanders of Satan against the most holy faith which he preached.

So

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So after his natural ſtrength was inſenſibly ſpent in the ſervice of the Lord by ſuch conſtant and laborious preaching, praying, repeating and ſtudying, oftentimes whole nights, to the impairing and ruining his vital powers, it pleaſed the Lord to call him by his laſt viſitation unto his eternal reſt; wherein there appeared (both by the whole courſe of his behaviour in it, but eſpecially by thoſe gracious words, and joyful exaltations which continually proceeded out of his mouth) ſuch faith, ſuch joy, ſuch a quiet and appeaſed conſcience, ſuch triumph over death and hell, as made the ſtanders by amazed. And withal, he forgot not (conſidering the cunning of Satan, and the lying power of darkneſs) to profeſs before ſome preſent the ſtedfaſtneſs of his faith to this effect: *That as he had lived in the free grace of God through Chriſt, ſo he did with confidence and great joy, even as much as his preſent condition was capable of, reſign his life and ſoul into the hands of his moſt dear Father.* And ſo without the leaſt thought of recanting or renouncing the doctrine he had preached (as ſome have falſely and wickedly ſpread abroad) after ſome time, with continual flowing expreſſions of joy, he departed this life, into the aſſured everlaſting embraces of his Redeemer. And now gracious Lord, who only art the Author and Finiſher of our faith, be pleaſed more and more to enlighten

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lighten the eyes, and open the mouths of all thy miniſters, that they may not ſhun or be afraid to declare unto thy people the whole council of God, even the utter diſability and nothingneſs of man; and withal the freeneſs of thy grace, the plenteouſneſs of thy redemption, and thy ſalvation, to the uttermoſt; that the hearts of thy people may rejoice, and their joy no man may take away from them. Amen. So prayeth

The meaneſt of the Servants of Chriſt,

ROBERT LANCASTER.

To

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To all thoſe that live Godly in CHRIST JESUS.

Chriſtian Friends,

IT is your honour, above many profeſſors in the world, to ſeal in your ſufferings the moſt refreſhing and ennobling truths of Chriſt. Your life which is hid with Chriſt in God, is that ſpark of glory, which hath always attracted the moſt venomous envies of thoſe men, who make the fleſh their reſidence. Be confident of this, that did you live in yourſelves, you ſhould live more quietly in the world; were you lower as ſaints, you ſhould be higher as creatures. Never expect to build peaceably upon earth, while you lay not your foundation in the duſt: the carnal mind cannot but be enmity againſt that which is the *baſis* of your principles, ſuitable to that expreſſion of our Saviour, John xvii. 14, *The world hath*

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hath hated them, becauſe they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. It hath ever been the policy of uſurpers, to keep down thoſe which can juſtly prove their deſcent from the royal blood, leſt they and their ill gotten glory fall together: ſo thoſe that have unduly inveſted themſelves with the title of ſaints, preſently contend for a room in the ſeat of the ſcornful, to diſparage and deſtroy thoſe who can clearly ſhew their communion with a higher blood than their own: where Chriſt doth moſt ſweetly and clearly reign, there the fleſh will moſt preſumptuouſly and cruelly tyrannize. However *(ſaints)* though it be your father's pleaſure, to allot you the valley of the ſhadow of death for your fleſh to walk in, whilſt your condition is in its infancy, yet know, that your glorious union with the Son of God ſhall be more than enough in this ſtate to refreſh and ſecure you: the world may outrun you, and come firſt to the top of their glory, but ſurely in the end, the inheritance will be yours, their firſt ſhall be laſt, and your laſt ſhall be firſt: *Eſau* outwreſtles *Jacob* in the womb, and comes firſt into the world, and according to the ſignification of his name, he is a great doer, a cunning hunter he was; but *Jacob* that comes forth laſt, takes the game; *Eſau* was the firſt born, but *Jacob* goes away poſſeſſed of the birth-right, and bleſſing alſo. Thus doth your Father deal with you

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you to make your latter end in brightneſs to outſhine your beginning: neither will your God deny you bread here in the midſt of famine: heaven rains manna in a wilderneſs, the rock gives water in the heat of drought. Believe it (you Goſpel-Chriſtians) your Beloved ſhall be all to you in the want of all; that poſſeſſion which he hath in you, will for ever entitle you, *A ſpring ſhut up, and a fountain ſealed,* he will be in you an everlaſting head for your ſupply to all expences in all conditions, when the moiſture of every thing below him ſhall be exhauſted by the creatures, which ſuck all they have from thence, even then, and ſo to eternity, ſhall Jeſus Chriſt be to you in the height of his fulneſs. I know nothing you have that is long-lived but Jeſus Chriſt. Earth, more groſly carnal, and heaven, more refinedly carnal, ſhall paſs away; even the kingdom of heaven, ſo far as it is made up of forms and adminiſtrations, ſhall wither and die; but the kingdom of God within you ſhall never be ſhaken. That divine nature which hath ſwallowed you up ſhall for ever ſatisfy you with variety of contentments. Let not therefore your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe alſo in Chriſt; you are ſatisfied, that the fulneſs of all things dwells in God, be alſo convinced, that Jeſus Chriſt, by his Father's appointment, is made partaker of the ſame fulneſs: *For it pleaſed the Father,*

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that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell. Now, whatever Jeſus Chriſt hath as a Mediator, you in your meaſure enjoy it; for it is the great ordinance of God, that all the ſaints ſhould be ſharers and partners with Jeſus Chriſt; we are fellow-citizens with him, and ſo intereſted in the immunities and privileges of the ſame charter with him; that as in our firſt ſtate we had all which *Adam* had, ſo alſo in our ſecond, we have all which Chriſt hath; why then doth paleneſs appear in your faces, and trembling ſit upon your lips? as if in the frowns of the creature all your felicity was buried. Oh remember you are one ſpirit with him, whoſe preſence is a conſtant ſpring, in a viſion of whoſe glory your beauty will be always lovely. I leave it as my humble requeſt to you, that you would not forget your reſting place: for the leaſt ignorance of that will make you apprehend every condition full of anxiety: this was that which was the bottom of *Iſrael*'s miſery, *Jer.* l. 6, *They have*, ſaith the text, *forgotten their reſting place:* or, their place to lie down in, as the original will bear it. If you make the creatures, or your ordinance privileges your duties, or your own righteouſneſs to be your reſting places, the leaſt diſturbance in the purſuit of all, or any of theſe will be very grievous and diſtracting; but if the Spirit helps you to remember him to be your reſt, who is the reſt of

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of God, trouble upon any of your enjoyments below himſelf will not have an uncomely influence upon you. To ſee a man fretting and vexing, that whilſt he was riding his journey, noiſes did keep him waking, would eaſily evince our reaſon to believe that this man had forgotten that his reſting place was ſomewhere elſe: ſo to ſee you, whilſt you were in your travel, diſcontented at that unquietneſs wherewith you are infeſted, would bring you under this ſuſpicion, that you had forgotten your reſting place; *Iſrael* expected beds in the wilderneſs, when God had appointed *Canaan* to be their reſt, and this was the ground of all their murmurings againſt God's diſpenſations. Oh that the Spirit therefore would always in the midſt of ſin and miſery, lead you to the Rock that is higher than yourſelves or any thing you eſteem above yourſelves. Many, as they create troubles, ſo alſo create remedies, even ſuch, which God never ſealed: many times we ſin, and then endeavour to make uſe of ſin for a cure: we break a command of God, and then call upon ſome duty or other below Chriſt, to make up that breach; and thus we bring a double pain and vexation upon ourſelves. When a wound is made by a weapon, a contrary plaiſter applied, makes it more uncapable of cure than it was before: ſo it is with all diſtempers in your ſouls, by rea-

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ſon of ſin; if you look upon any beſide the brazen Serpent, your diſtemper will return with double vigour upon you. But certainly, one viſion of Jeſus Chriſt will bid defiance to the ſtouteſt of your luſts, and all the powers of darkneſs combined with them, and in an encounter will more than conquer them. The hoſt of *Iſrael* was very great and well prepared for the battle, but if ever the day be won, *David* muſt come into the field. Our faſtings and prayers appear a huge hoſt, but they will rather gaze upon, than engage againſt an enemy, if Jeſus Chriſt be not in the field; but the very countenance of Jeſus Chriſt doth ſoon *ſtill the enemy and the avenger*, and makes all the iſſue of ſin in the ſoul, to prove abortive. The marrow of all this you have clearly laid open in the demonſtration of the Spirit, in the following Sermons, which I am confident, to all that are led by the Spirit, will be a full vindication of the truth of Chriſt, and of the worthy Author from thoſe baſe aſperſions caſt upon both, by pride and ignorance. You ſhall find the ſum of this Work, to be the ſole exaltation of the Lord Jeſus in ſaints and duties, and the debaſing and trampling upon all fleſh that ſhall aſpire to the ſeat of Chriſt, the reviving and encouraging of drooping hearts, by preſenting Chriſt, not themſelves, in all his accompliſhments to them. Now, if the world ſhall baptize this doctrine

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doctrine *Antinomianism*, the Lord grant that all the doctrine preached throughout the world, may deservedly be called by that name. Ye that know Christ, be not afraid, notwithstanding all the censures of the world, to read the book, and receive the truth; be assured it is not presented to thee as a bait, which is an introduction to a snare, but if the spirit of Jesus accompany it, thou wilt certainly say, as Christ did, *I have meat to eat which ye know not of.* I should rather cloud the Work, than honour it, if I should proceed to a further commendation of it. I leave it therefore to the Spirit to make out the worth of it to the spirits of the saints, and am concluded under this faith, that all the malice and carnal wisdom of this generation shall never be able to interrupt the course of it. As for the Author, though he was never known to me, yet those Works of his which I have perused, do encourage me to believe that whilst he lived in the world, he lived in God, and now his earthly tabernacle being dissolved, he is taken up into that fulness which he only saw in part whilst he lived here; and though whilst he was upon earth, it might be his portion with his Lord and Master to be mocked and buffeted in the High Priest's hall, yet now sits with him in the fruition of that glory for which he was then a sufferer. What now remains, but that ye which through the spirit have

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have tasted the sweetness of his ministry in the same spirit, look up to our Father, and beg of him, that those who survive in the work of the gospel, may go on where he left, and in the plentiful effusion of the Spirit, the glorious truths of Christ may be amongst the saints, as the sun in his height? And among the rest, forget not him (though unworthy to be numbered with them) who is ambitious of nothing else, but to be

All in Christ, and nothing in self,

GEORGE COKAYN.

APRIL 13, 1646.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Publisher informs the Reader, that the three last Prefaces are printed verbatim from the Quarto Edition, which Dr. GILL *omitted in his.——Also to give this Edition the greater advantage, a few Scripture references will be inserted in a* parenthesis *where any abstruse word seems to require it.——The Reader may rest assured that no* abridgement *or* alteration *of a* single word *shall be suffered to take place in the Work.*

SERMON

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SERMON I.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

IN the 33d verſe of the former chapter, you ſhall find Chriſt breaking the ſad and doleful buſineſs, which he knew well would go near to the hearts of his diſciples, namely, his departure from them: *Little children, yet a little while ye ſhall ſeek me, but ſhall not find me. Peter* upon this, aſks him whither he goes? He tells him, whither he cannot follow him now, but afterwards he ſhall. Now knowing how ſadly this went to the hearts of his diſciples, he laboured to raiſe them up, and to eſtabliſh them againſt the drooping that theſe ſad tidings might occaſion; and that is in the beginning of this chapter, *Let not your hearts be troubled:* and therein doth endeavour to ſtir up their ſpirits: *firſt*, by telling them the expediency of that departure of his: it was the purpoſe of God, that as all things

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things should be wrought effectually by Christ, so the communication of all these things to our spirits, should be by the Spirit of Christ. Now Christ tells them expressly, *That except he goes away, the Comforter cannot come to them;* he, that must have the dispensing of those things to their spirits, namely, the Comforter, cannot come unto them. But, *secondly*, he stays not here; he encourageth them with another argument, *I go to prepare a place;* and he tells them the place where; *In my Father's house are many mansions.* And, least they should suspect, he tells them, *If it were not so, I would have told you.* And because he would not speak in a cloud of these things, he tells them, *You know whither I go, and the way ye know.* Now *Thomas* comes in with an objection; *We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* Christ answers him in the words of the text, *I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.*

I will not spin out time about the coherence and analysis of this text: the main point is briefly this:

Christ is our way, so that there is no coming to the Father but by Him.

In the handling of which truth, let me tell you, that I know this doctrine is generally received, as it is generally delivered; but, I fear, in the particularising those things that make up the full truth of the doctrine, every spirit will not, nor can receive it. That you may, at least, see the clear truth, in the bowels of this general doctrine;

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(for, beloved, you must know there is hidden manna in this very pot) I say, that you may both see it, and taste the sweetness of it, let us consider, *First*, In what regard Christ is said to be *the way to the Father.* *Secondly*, What kind of way he is. *Thirdly*, From whence he doth become this way. And, *Fourthly*, What use we may make of it.

First, In what sense Christ is said to be our way, that there is *no coming to the Father but by him.* You all know, beloved, that every way, high-way, or path-way, necessarily imports two terms, from whence and whereunto; when a man enters into a way, he leaves the place where he was, and goes to the place where he was not. Christ being our way, the phrase imports thus much to us, that by Christ we pass from a state and condition wherein we were, to a state and condition wherein we were not; the last term is expressed in the text, *He is the way to the Father;* the first term must be implied. To come to him, we must leave some condition where we were before. Bear a while with the expression, till I open the thing to you.

The state, from which Christ is our way to the Father, is two-fold; *first*, a state of sin; and, *secondly*, a state of wrath; the state whereunto Christ is the way, is, indeed, expressed here to be to the Father; the meaning is, to the grace of the Father, and to the glory of the Father. The sum is this, Christ is so our way, from a state of sin and wrath, to a state of grace and glory, that there is no coming from the one to the other, but

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by Chriſt. But we muſt deſcend to particulars that we may know the fatneſs and marrow of this truth; which indeed hath an inebriating virtue in it, to lay a ſoul aſleep,* with the admirable ſweetneſs and excellency thereof; no muſic can tickle the ears as this truth may, when it is truly and thoroughly dived into: no, nor tickle the heart neither. Beloved, I muſt tell you, when your ſouls once find this real truth, they cannot chooſe but ſay, we have found a ranſom.

Firſt of all, Chriſt is a way from a ſtate of ſinfulneſs. Now what myſtery is there in this, more than ordinary, will you ſay? Beloved, it is certainly true, there is nothing of Chriſt, there is nothing comes from Chriſt, but it is in a myſtery; the goſpel ſeems to be clear, and ſo it is, to thoſe whoſe eyes Chriſt opens, but certainly it is hid to ſome perſons that ſhall periſh. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them to babes; even ſo, O Father, becauſe it pleaſed thee.* But what hiddenneſs is in this? There is a two-fold conſideration of ſinfulneſs, from which Chriſt is our way in a ſpecial manner. There is, *firſt*, that which commonly we call, the guilt of ſin, which indeed is the fault, or a perſon's being faulty, as he is a tranſgreſſor. There is, *ſecondly*, the power or dominion of ſin. Chriſt is the way from both theſe. Firſt of all, Chriſt is the way from the guilt of

[* Matt. xi. 28. Heb. iv. 3. Iſaiah xxxii. 18.]

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ſin; for a man to be rid of the guilt of ſin, is no more but this, namely, upon trial to be acquitted from the charge of ſin, that is laid to him, and to be freed from it; or for a perſon, in judgment, to be pronounced actually an innocent and a juſt perſon, as having no ſin to be charged upon him: this is to be free from the guilt of ſin. A man is not free from a fault, as long as the fault is laid to his charge; he is then free from the fault, when it is not charged upon him. All the powers of the world united, are not able to pronounce a perſon faultleſs and an innocent perſon, but only the power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. He alone is the way, by which a poor ſinner, even in this world, may be pronounced an innocent perſon; even in this world, I ſay, and acquitted and diſcharged from the fault and guilt of his ſin. It is impoſſible the law ſhould do it; the apoſtle ſpeaks it expreſsly, *Rom.* viii. 2, *The law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt hath freed me from the law of ſin and death.* Here it is put upon Chriſt, to free from the guilt of ſin. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, for ſin, condemned ſin in the fleſh. The law,* ſaith the text, *could not do it;* not that the law could not pronounce innocence where innocency was: not that the law could not condemn ſin, where it is condemnable by its authority: the law can do this, if it can find ſubjects whereupon to do it. But the law runs upon theſe terms, as it finds a perſon himſelf without fault, ſo it pronounceth ſentence upon him;

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him; if it finds a fault in his perſon, then it chargeth this fault upon the perſon alone, as thus: *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* 'Till then thou canſt not be abſolutely freed from the acting of a thing, in its nature that is faulty; thou canſt not hear it ſpeak any otherwiſe but of faultineſs, which it chargeth upon thee.

Much leſs can the heart of man acquit him as an innocent perſon, or do away from him that ſinfulneſs, namely, the guilt of his own ſin. *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts. If a man ſay he hath no ſin, he is a liar,* ſaith St. *John, and the truth is not in him.* If the heart ſhould ſay to any man he is an innocent perſon, it doth but lie.

If angels ſhould ſpend their ſtrength, and ſhould be annihilated, to procure the innocency of a poor ſinner; alas, their very being is too poor a price, or too mean a value to take away the ſins of the world.

Beloved, to go a little farther in it, it is not man's righteouſneſs, that he does, though aſſiſted by the Spirit of God in the acting of it, that can pronounce him an innocent perſon, that can be a way to him from his fault and guiltineſs. This you know, that the payment of the laſt half year's rent, is no payment for the firſt half year's rent, nor is it amends for the non-payment of that which was due before; if that had been paid before, this likewiſe muſt be paid now. Suppoſe a man

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a man could perform a righteous action without blame, what ſatisfaction is this for former tranſgreſſions? Nay, beloved, let me tell you, there is nothing but menſtruouſneſs, as the prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, in the beſt of man's righteouſneſs, *all our righteouſneſs is as a menſtruous cloth:* but as for Chriſt, that bleſſed Saviour, he is able to *ſave to the uttermoſt them that come to God by him;* not only to ſave them, in reſpect of glory hereafter, but alſo to ſave them in reſpect of ſinfulneſs here; to ſnatch them, as a fire-brand, out of the fire of their own ſin, to deliver them out of their own tranſgreſſion. Chriſt, I ſay, is the way, and the abſolute and complete way, to rid every ſoul, that comes to God by him, from all filthineſs; ſo that the perſon, to whom Chriſt is the way, ſtands in the ſight of God, as having no fault at all in him. Beloved, theſe two are contradictions, for a perſon to be reckoned a faulty perſon, and yet that perſon to be reckoned a juſt or an innocent perſon; if he be faulty, he is not innocent; if he be innocent, he is not faulty. Now it is the main ſtream of the whole goſpel, that Chriſt juſtifies the ungodly; if he himſelf juſtifies him, there is no fault to be caſt upon him; mark it well, as that wherein conſiſts the life of your ſoul, and the joy of your ſpirits: I ſay it holds forth the Lord Chriſt, as freely tendering himſelf to people, as conſidering them only as ungodly perſons receiving him; you have no ſooner received him, but you are inſtantly juſtified by him, and, in this juſtification, you are diſ-

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diſcharged from all the faults that may be laid to your charge. There is not one ſin you commit, after you receive Chriſt, that God can charge upon your perſon.*

A man would think, that there needs not much time to be ſpent to clear ſuch a truth as this is, being ſo currently carried along by the whole ſtream of the goſpel. But, beloved, becauſe I know tender hearts ſtumble much at it, give me leave to clear it unto you, by manifeſt ſcriptures, ſuch as are written in ſuch great letters, as he that runs may read them: obſerve that in *Pſalm* li. *Waſh me*, ſaith *David*; what then? *I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.* Snow, you know, hath no ſpot at all, no fault, no blemiſh. *David* ſhall be leſs blameable, have leſs faultineſs, have leſs ſpottedneſs in him, than is in the very ſnow itſelf. In *Canticles* iv. 7, you ſhall find Chriſt ſpeaking ſtrange language to his church, admirable language indeed; *Thou art fair my love*, ſaith Chriſt, *thou haſt no ſpot in thee at all.* I do but cite the very words of the text, therefore let none cavil, leaſt they be found fighters againſt God; *ſhe hath no ſpot in her.* In *Iſaiah* liii, where he ſpeaks admirably concerning the effectualneſs of Chriſt's death, he tells us, *That the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all:* thy iniquities, my iniquities; as our

* That is, to condemnation; becauſe all have been charged on Chriſt, and he has made ſatisfaction for them; and beſides, in this manifeſtative juſtification the Doctor is ſpeaking of, there is an open and full diſcharge from all ſin.

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forefathers iniquities, ſo our poſterity's iniquities; the iniquities of us all the Lord hath laid upon Chriſt; they cannot lie upon Chriſt, and upon us too: if they be reckoned to the charge of Chriſt, they are not reckoned to the charge of the perſon that doth receive this Chriſt: but *The Lord hath laid them upon him,* ſaith the text. And what iniquity? Doth he lay upon him ſome iniquity, and leave ſome iniquity to us? Look into *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25, and you ſhall there ſee the extent of iniquities that God hath laid upon Chriſt; that he takes away from the ſinner, I mean the ſinner juſtified by Chriſt that received him: there you have the covenant largely repeated, the new covenant; not according to the covenant God made with our fathers: and the firſt words of the covenant are theſe, *I will ſprinkle you with clean water, and ye ſhall be clean from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you.* From all your filthineſs; ſmall ſins, as ſome will call them; great ſins, turbulent ſins, ſcandalous ſins, any ſins, any filthineſs; I will cleanſe you from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols. Look into *Ezek.* xvi. 7, a notable chapter indeed, ſetting open the unſearchable riches of the love of Chriſt to men; *I found thee polluted in thy blood,* ſaith he; ſuch blood *that no eye could pity thee, or do any good to thee.* Well, no creature doth pity him, was it ſo with God? No. *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, live; yea when I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, live; when I paſſed by thee, thy time was*

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was the time of love, ſaith God, *I ſpread my ſkirt over thee;* mark it, I pray you; not a ſcanty ſkirt to cover ſome of this blood and filth, but a broad ſkirt, a large ſkirt, a white raiment, as Chriſt calls it himſelf, as he ſpeaks to the church in the *Revelation; I counſel thee to buy of me white raiment, that thy nakedneſs may not appear.* It ſeems there is ſuch a covering of Chriſt, that he caſts upon a perſon, while he is conſidered in his blood, that covers his nakedneſs, that none of it doth appear: and yet a little further in *Ezek.* xvi. then was ſhe dyed deep in water, after ſhe was in covenant; *yea I thoroughly waſhed away thy blood:* and this was added, that no man might cavil. It is true, God caſts a covering over our ſinfulneſs, but it is our ſinfulneſs ſtill, it is but covered; nay, ſaith the Lord, I have waſhed it away, *then waſhed I thee with water.* But ſome will ſay, theſe are obſcure texts and myſtical; a man cannot build upon theſe, that faultineſs is not reckoned to believers, being taken off by Chriſt. To come therefore to a clearer manifeſtation of the goſpel, mark what the apoſtle ſaith in *Epheſians* v. 25. Chriſt *purges and ſanctifies his church, that he might preſent it to himſelf, not having ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it may be holy, and without blame.* The words run in the preſent tenſe; not that in glory only we ſhall be without ſpot, but now, even now, we ſhall be without blemiſh, we ſhall be without ſpot and wrinkle; and that he might now preſent us to himſelf. So in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. you ſhall ſee the truth

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truth ſpoken more emphatically, the apoſtle runs in a mighty ſtrain in this buſineſs; *He was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Both terms are expreſſed in the abſtract; he was made ſin for us; here you ſee plainly, our ſins are ſo tranſlated to Chriſt, that God reckons Chriſt the very ſinner;* nay, God reckons all our ſins to be his, and makes him to be ſin for us; and what is the fruit of this? We are thereby made the righteouſneſs of God in him. If we be righteouſneſs, where is our ſinfulneſs to be charged upon us? he tells us expreſsly, in 1 *John* i. 7, *That the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin;* the blood of Chriſt doth cleanſe us: he doth not ſay, the blood of Chriſt ſhall cleanſe us from all ſin; but he ſaith, for the preſent time, the blood of Chriſt doth cleanſe us from all ſin. *John* the *Baptiſt* hath this expreſſion, *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the world.* He takes them away. How doth he take them away, and yet leaveth them behind, and yet charge them upon the perſon that doth believe? The perſon muſt be diſcharged, or elſe how can they be taken away. This is the main thing imported in that notable ſacrifice of the ſcape-goat, *Lev.* xvi. 21. The high-prieſt muſt lay his hand upon the head of the goat to be carried away into the wilderneſs; the text ſaith, *It was the laying the ſins of the people, and that when they were laid upon him, he goes into the*

* That is, by imputation; not as the author and committer of ſin; and, in the ſame way, God reckons our ſins to be Chriſt's; not as committed by him, but as imputed to him.

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wilderneſs. He goes into the wilderneſs and leaves their ſins behind him; then the end of this ſervice were fruſtrated; for he was to carry them away that were laid upon him: ſo Chriſt, as the ſcape-goat, hath our ſins laid upon his back, and he carries them away; and therefore in *Pſalm* ciii. 12. it is ſaid, *That God removes our ſins from us as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt; he caſts our ſins into the bottom of the ſea.* Beſides all theſe texts of ſcripture, I might produce multitudes more, if need were, to this purpoſe; but, I think, there can be nothing in the world more clear than this truth, that Chriſt is ſuch a way to a poor believing ſoul, that he hath received, that he might take and carry away all the ſins of ſuch a perſon; that he is no longer reckoned as having ſins upon him.

But ſome will object, Do not thoſe, that receive Chriſt, actually commit ſin?

I anſwer, Yea, they do commit ſin, and the truth is, they can do nothing but commit ſin. If a perſon, that is a believer, hath any thing in the world, he hath received this; that if he doth any thing that is good, it is the Spirit of God that doth it, not he; therefore he himſelf doth nothing but ſin; his ſoul is a mint of ſin. But then you will ſay, If he doth ſin, muſt not God charge it where it is? Muſt not he be reckoned to be a ſinner, while he doth ſin? I anſwer, No; though he doth ſin, yet he is not to be reckoned a ſinner,* but

* Not that the believer, who has received Chriſt, ceaſes to be a ſinner in himſelf; for the Doctor affirms, in this ſame paragraph, that

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but his ſins are reckoned to be taken away from him. A man borrows an hundred pounds; ſome man will ſay, Doth he not owe this hundred pounds, ſeeing he borrowed it? I ſay, No, in caſe another hath paid the hundred pounds for him. A man doth ſin againſt God, God reckons not his ſin to be his, he reckons it Chriſt's, therefore he cannot reckon it his. If the Lord did lay the iniquity of men upon Chriſt, (as I ſaid before) then how can he lay it upon their perſons? Thou haſt ſinned, Chriſt takes it off; ſuppoſing, I ſay, thou haſt received Chriſt. And as God doth reckon ſin to Chriſt, and charges ſin upon him, ſo, if thou be of the ſame mind with God, thou muſt alſo reckon this ſin of thine upon Chriſt; his back hath borne it, he hath carried it away.

For my part, I cannot ſee what every perſon will object; I will endeavour to make this truth clear as the day to you. Do but conſider with yourſelves what Chriſt came into the world for, if not to take away the ſins of the world? He need never to have died, but to take away the ſins of the world. Did he come to take them away,

that he commits ſin, and does nothing but ſin; and much leſs that he ceaſed to be a ſinner, before he was a believer, or from the death of Chriſt, as D. W. in his *Goſpel-Truth, &c.* falſely aſcribes to him, on account of this paſſage: but the ſenſe is, that a believer having received Chriſt, is not reckoned as a ſinner in the ſight of God, and in the eye of juſtice, and as conſidered in Chriſt, all his ſins being charged to him, and expiated and atoned for by his ſacrifice; as alſo, ſeeing ſuch a one has received, with Chriſt, a diſcharge from all his ſins into his own conſcience, he ſhould reckon himſelf, and his ſins, as God does, who reckons them to Chriſt, and not to him.

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and did he leave them behind him? Then he loſt his labour. Did he not leave them behind him? then his perſon is diſcharged of them from whom he hath taken them: but if the perſon be not diſcharged of them, he is not a juſtified perſon in himſelf; neither can you account his perſon juſtified, as long as you account his ſin upon him. It is a contradiction to ſay, that a man is innocent, yet guilty. Beloved, then here is a point of ſtrange raviſhing uſefulneſs to ſouls, that can but draw towards it and receive it. All the difficulty lies, whether it be my portion, and thy portion; whether I may ſay, Chriſt is my way, thus from this guilt, that there can be none of this charged upon me: I ſay, if thou doſt receive Chriſt, if thou doſt but ſet footing into this way, Chriſt; as ſoon as ever thou art ſtept into this way, thou art ſtept out of the condition thou waſt in. Mens receiving of Chriſt! what is that, you will ſay? To receive him, is to come to him; *He that comes to me, I will in no wiſe caſt off.* Mark, many think there is ſuch a kind of ſinfulneſs, that is a bar to them, that though they would have Chriſt, yet there is not a way open for them to take him. Beloved, there is no way of ſinfulneſs to bar thee from coming to Chriſt; if thou haſt a heart to come to him, and againſt all objections, to venture thyſelf with joy into the boſom of Chriſt, for the diſcharge of all thy ſinfulneſs; Chriſt himſelf (which I tremble to expreſs, though it be with indignation) he ſhould be a liar, if thou comeſt to him, and

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and he caſts thee off. *Every one that will,* ſaith he, *let him come and drink of the water of life freely.* You ſhall find, beloved, the great complaint of Chriſt, thus, *He came to his own, and his own received him not:* and to the Scribes and Phariſees, *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* The truth is, men dote upon the eſtabliſhing of a righteouſneſs of their own to bring them to Chriſt; and it is but preſumptuous, or licentious doctrine, that Chriſt may be their Chriſt, and they receive him, and be conſidered ſimply ungodly, as enemies: but they are abominably injurious to the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, to the exceeding bounty of that grace of his, who ſaves from ſin, without reſpect of any thing in the creature, that he himſelf might have the praiſe of the glory of his grace. The covenant, concerning the blotting out of tranſgreſſions, is a free covenant: *Not for thy ſake do I this, be it known unto thee,* ſaith the Lord, *for thou art a ſtubborn and ſtiff-necked people; but for my own ſake do I this.* All this grace to acquit thy ſoul, here and hereafter, comes out of the bowels of God himſelf; and he hath no other motive in the world, but ſimply, and only, his own bowels, that put him upon the deliverance of a poor wretch from iniquity, and diſcharge of ſin, from that load which otherwiſe would grind and cruſh him to powder: I ſay, his own bowels are the motive. God neither looks to any thing in the creature to win him to ſhew kindneſs, nor yet any thing in the creature to debar him; neither righteouſneſs in men that perſuades God to pardon

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don sin; nor unrighteousness in men that hinders him from giving this pardon, and acquitting them from their transgressions; it is only and simply for his own sake he doth it unto men.

Thus you have seen the first particular, that I have endeavoured to clear from all cavils and objections that may be laid upon it.

In one word, beloved, mistake me not, I am far from imagining any believer is freed from acts of sin; he is freed only from the charge of sin; that is, from being a subject to be charged with sin; all his sins are charged upon Christ, he being made sin for him; yet Christ is not an actual sinner; but Christ is all the sinners in the world by imputation;* and through this imputation all our sins are so done away from us, that we stand as Christ's own person did stand, and doth stand in the sight of God.† Now, had not Christ made a full satisfaction to the Father, he himself must have perished under those sins that he did bear; but in that he went through the thing, and paid

* This shews what is the Doctor's true sense in a former passage, p. 11. where he says, Christ is *the very sinner*; that is, by imputation, as here explained, and not an actual sinner. One would be tempted to think, at first reading this clause, that the Doctor was for universal redemption, when he says, that Christ is *all the sinners in the world* by imputation; and, perhaps, such expressions as these, with some others that will be observed hereafter, made the learned *Hoornbeck* conclude, that he held the doctrine of universal redemption; but his sense is not, that Christ personated all the sinners in the world, or had all the sins of every individual person laid on him; but that he was all those sinners in the world, or represented them, whose sins were imputed to him; and these, as he often says in his sermons on *Isaiah* liii. 6. were the iniquities of the Lord's people, of the church, and of the elect.

[† Col. ii. 10.]

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the full price, as he carried them away from us, ſo he laid them down from himſelf. So that now Chriſt is freed from ſin, and we are freed from ſin in him; he was freed from ſin imputed unto him and laid upon him, when he ſuffered; we were freed from ſin as he takes it off from our ſhoulders, and hath carried it away; *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.* That is, with ſin. And what follows? *And I will give you reſt.* As long as the burthen is upon the ſhoulders, ſo long there is no reſt. Therefore this doth neceſſarily import, that Chriſt muſt take away the burthen, that we may have reſt.

Secondly, Chriſt is not only the way from the fault of ſin, but he is the way from the power of ſin. There is a threefold power of ſin; there is *firſt*, a reigning power; and *ſecondly*, a tyranizing power; and *thirdly*, a buſtling or ruffling power of ſin; and they are all three of them diſtinct. Chriſt is a way from all theſe in believers: from the reigning power of it; ſo the apoſtle ſpeaks expreſsly, *Rom.* vi. 14, *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.* Grace there is Chriſt himſelf. *His ſervants ye are, to whom ye obey, whether of ſin unto death, or of righteouſneſs unto life; but, thanks be to God, ye have obeyed the truth.* The meaning is this; while we are under the law, and have no better help, ſin reigns in us, the law cannot bridle it in; but when we come under grace by Chriſt, the dominion of the law, or rather the dominion of ſin, which the

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law cannot reſtrain, is captivated and ſubjected by Chriſt; *I will ſubdue your iniquities*, as it is ſpoken by the prophet *Micah*. We are diſcharged from the fault and guilt of ſin, that is, abſolutely at once;* but the diſcharge from the reigning power of ſin, that is done by degrees; the faultineſs of ſin is left behind the back of the believer, but the power and reſiſtency of ſin lie all along in the way; but ſtill Chriſt breaks through, and makes way, 1 *Cor.* x. 13. where you have this admirable expreſſion, *No temptation hath happened unto you, but ſuch as is common to men; God is faithful, and will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation make a way that you may be able to bear it.*

There is a tyranizing power of ſin, that is, not when ſin is choſen of the ſoul, as that under which the ſoul both affects and will live; but when ſin hath gotten a preſent over-maſtery of the ſoul, and in ſpite of all the ſpirit can do, will keep it under. This, I ſay, is the tyranny of ſin; and this was the caſe of the apoſtle *Paul*, *Rom.* vii, *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me: I find a law in my members warring againſt the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin; ſo that the good I would do, I do not; and the evil that I would not, that do I.* In regard of which he makes a bitter complaint; but mark the end of all, *But thanks be to God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Here you ſee, that though ſin hath a tyranny over the ſpirit

[* Acts xiii. 39.]

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ſpirit of a perſon, yet through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt this tyranny is abated.

Yet, *Thirdly*, it is abated by degrees; for the buſtling power of ſin, namely, though it cannot be entertained, yet it will be troubleſome to the ſoul. Now Chriſt is the way, by degrees, alſo, from this trouble of ſin; for by degrees he crucifies the fleſh with the affections and luſts thereof, and brings down the power of it by treading down Satan, that is the egger on of ſin, to make it ſo troubleſome; by overcoming the world, that adminiſters occaſion of this troubleſomeneſs; *Fear not*, ſaith Chriſt, *I have overcome the world.* But ſtill, I ſay, he doth this by degrees, and ſo he doth it by degrees, that ſometimes he lets the work be at a ſtand; and ſometimes the tyranny ſhall be over the ſpirit, and the ſpirit ſhall be under that tyranny a good while; ſometimes the ſpirit ſhall be under the troubleſomeneſs of ſin, and be conſtantly exerciſed with it. But you muſt know, that it is neither the tyranny, nor the troubleſomeneſs of ſin in a believer, that doth eclipſe the beauty of Chriſt, or the favour of God to the ſoul. Our ſtanding is not founded upon the ſubduing of our ſins, but upon that foundation that never fails; and that is Chriſt himſelf, upon his faithfulneſs and truth. Men think they are conſumed, when they are troubled with ſin: why? becauſe of their tranſgreſſion. But mark what the Lord ſaith; *I, the Lord, change not; therefore ye ſons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* It is not, *you* change not, therefore ye are not conſumed; but

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but *I* change not; I have loved you freely, I will love you freely, I cannot alter: *Whom he loves, he loves unto the end:* it is in reſpect of his unchangeableneſs.

Though there be ebbings and flowings of the outward man; nay, of the inward man, in the buſineſs of ſanctification; yet this is certainly true, *That believers are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith, unto ſalvation.* They are kept in holineſs, ſincerity, ſimplicity of heart; but all this hath nothing to do with the peace of his ſoul,* and the ſalvation and juſtification thereof: Chriſt is he that juſtifies the ungodly; Chriſt is he that is the peace-maker; and as Chriſt is the peace-maker, ſo all this peace depends upon Chriſt alone. Beloved, if you will fetch your peace from any thing in the world but Chriſt, you will fetch it from where it is not. *This people* (ſaith the prophet *Jeremy*) *hath committed two evils.* What are they? *They have forſaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have digged to themſelves ciſterns, broken ciſterns, that will hold no water.*

What is that fountain of living waters? Chriſt is the fountain of peace and life; and men forſake that peace that is to be had in Chriſt, when they would have peace out of righteouſneſs of their own, out of their great enlargements, out of humiliations. Theſe are broken ciſterns, and

* That is, to make peace with God for his ſoul, ſince Chriſt is the peace-maker, ſaviour, and juſtifier; otherwiſe to be kept in theſe things contributes to ſpiritual peace of mind, under the influence of divine grace, and ſprinkling of the blood of *Jeſus.*

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what peace is there in them? Is there not ſinfulneſs in them? Who can ſay, I have waſhed my hands? If there be ſinfulneſs in them, where then is their peace? Sin ſpeaks nothing but war to the ſoul. Let me tell you, beloved, you that look after peace from the ſubduing of your ſins; what peace can it afford you, in caſe there be any defects of ſubduing of your ſins? There can be no peace.

Suppoſe God had nothing in the world to charge upon you, but only that ſinfulneſs in the very ſubduing of your corruptions, what peace could you have? what could not God find in us? Suppoſe your eyes were enlightened to ſee yourſelves, how much filthineſs there is in all your wreſtlings; I ſay, how much defects and infirmities might you ſee? Could you chooſe but fall foul upon your own ſpirits, for theſe infirmities and defects of your beſt performances, ſeeing the wages of ſin is death? What can you run to then? None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. While your acts, in reſpect of filthineſs, proclaim nothing but war, Chriſt alone, and his blood, proclaim nothing but peace. Therefore, I give this hint by the way, when I ſpeak of the power of Chriſt ſubduing ſin; becauſe, from the power of it in men, they are apt to think their peace depends upon this ſubduing of ſin. If their ſins be ſubdued, then they may have peace; and if they cannot be ſubdued, then no peace: fetch peace where it is to be had; let ſubduing of ſin alone for peace;* let Chriſt

* Let it be obſerved, that the Doctor is ſpeaking not of ſubduing ſin, as it is an act of God's grace, and owing to the power

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Chriſt have that which is his due; it is he alone that ſpeaks peace. It remains, we ſhould ſpeak further, that as Chriſt is a way from ſin, both in reſpect of fault and power, ſo he is a way from wrath: and he is a way to the grace and glory of the Father, and what kind of way he is. But the ſearching into every corner of this truth, for the ſifting of it, hath brought me exceedingly back beyond my expectation. I ſhall have further occaſion in the afternoon to ſpeak of it.

power of Chriſt, who has made an end of it, and ſo made peace; on this ſubduing of ſin peace depends, *Mic.* vii. 18. *Deut.* ix. 24. but of men's ſubduing ſin, by their own power and ſtrength, and in order to make peace with God; whereas ſubduing ſin, or mortifying the deeds of the body, believers are concerned for, is not of themſelves, and done in their own ſtrength, but through the ſpirit, power and grace of God; and not to make peace with him, but to ſhew their diſlike of ſin, their gratitude to God, and that they are debtors to him, to live after the ſpirit, *Rom.* viii. 12, 13. wherefore ſubduing of ſin is to be let alone for the end mentioned, in order to peace with God, that Chriſt might have his due and glory, who has both made and ſpeaks peace; otherwiſe ſubduing of ſin, or the weakening the power of it, by the ſpirit and grace of God, is the concern of every believer, and is wiſhed for by him, and makes for the tranquility of his mind.

SERMON

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SERMON II.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

NOW we go on: Chriſt, as he is the way from ſin, ſo he is the way from wrath; and, indeed, muſt be the way from wrath, when he is the way from ſin; wrath is but the wages of ſin, the effect wrought by ſin. Take away the cauſe, and the effect dies; deſtroy the root, and the branches wither of themſelves. Man's ſin is the root of wrath; when ſin is deſtroyed and aboliſhed, wrath muſt needs ſink and periſh. Chriſt is ſo the way from wrath, that all that receive him are wholly diſcharged, both from God's affection of wrath, (as I may ſo ſpeak) and from the effects of that affection of his. Wrath is conſidered in theſe two reſpects: *firſt*, Simply, as the diſpleaſure of God itſelf; the offence that God takes: *ſecondly*, In the fruits of this offence, that he manifeſts in the expreſſion of his indignation and diſpleaſure. Chriſt is the way, the only way, the effectual and infalli-

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ble way, from all this wrath, to all that do receive him.

First, From the affection itself of wrath. Let me tell you, beloved, (I would to God you could receive it according to the manifest evidence of scripture) God no longer stands offended nor displeased; though a believer, after he be a believer, sins often,* yet, I say, God no longer stands offended and displeased with him, when he has once received Christ; and unto them, saith God, *Fury is not in me*, Isa. xxvii. 4. And in *Isaiah* liii. 5. (among many other notable expressions of God's being well-pleased towards poor sinners through Christ) he saith, *He was wounded for their transgressions;* you have this admirable expression of the effect of his wounding, *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:* satisfied, here, is as much as pacified; they are all one. The travail of the soul of Christ makes God such amends for the sinfulness of believers, that he can no longer stand offended and displeased with them.

* As every believer does, and yet God is not offended with him; the meaning is not, that his sin is not offensive to God; it is in its own nature, being contrary to the nature of God, as the Doctor in a following page observes, and where he also distinguishes between God's being offended with the sins of believers, and with their persons; and it is in this latter sense he is to be understood here: for God loves them with an everlasting love, and has no fury in him towards them; and besides, all their sins are fully satisfied for by Christ, who thereby has took away all cause of offence, that is, sin. So the very learned *Witsius*, referring to this passage of the Doctor's, observes, he is to be understood, *respectu plenissimæ illius reconciliationis quam impetravit Christus*, in respect of that most full reconciliation which Christ has obtained, and which is adjudged to believers in justification. *Animadv. Irenicæ*, c. 12. sect. 7.

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If God doth remain offended with them, there is yet ſome of their ſinfulneſs remaining to be taken away, that this offence alſo may be taken away. All their ſins muſt be taken away from them, and all offences will be removed from them. But, except God will be offended, where there is no cauſe to be offended, (which is blaſphemy to ſpeak) he will not be offended with believers. For I ſay he hath no cauſe to be offended with a believer, becauſe he doth not find the ſin of the believer to be the believer's own ſin, but he finds it the ſin of Chriſt;* *He was made ſin for us; God laid the iniquities of us all upon him. The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin: He bare our ſins in his own body on the tree;* and if he bear our ſins, he muſt bear the diſpleaſure for them; nay, he did bear the diſpleaſure, the indignation of the Lord; and if he did bear the indignation of the Lord, either he did bear all, or but part: if he did not bear all the indignation of the Lord, then he doth not *ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come to God by him;* as he is ſaid to do, *Heb.* vii. 25. I ſay, not to the uttermoſt, becauſe here is ſome offence, ſome indignation, left behind; and for lack of

* Being imputed to him, and atoned for by him; and ſo the offence by it, to the juſtice of God, is ceaſed, having an ample ſatisfaction. So the above-mentioned judicious profeſſor *Witſius* gives the ſenſe of the paſſage. "God is not offended without a "cauſe; there is no cauſe of offence but ſin; Chriſt has borne "and taken away all the ſins of believers, and the moſt juſt "offence of God for them; and not only ſome part of the of-"fence, but all, all entirely, therefore there remains none that "lies upon believers; to theſe God ſays, *Fury is not in me,* Iſaiah "xxvii. 4." *Ibid.*

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taking this indignation upon himself, it falls upon believers. So that, either you must say, Christ is an imperfect Saviour, and hath left some scattering of wrath behind, that will light upon the head of the believer; or else you will say, he is a perfect Saviour, and takes away all displeasure of God; then there remains none of it upon the person of a believer. Beloved, for my part, I understand not what clouds are in the mind and judgment of other men; to me it seems, there is no truth more abundantly cleared, in all the scriptures, than this one truth of the transferring of our sins, and so the offence for them, wholly upon the back of Christ; and thus a poor soul hath rest from the indignation of God, as Christ takes the burthen off from his shoulders. There is a twofold burthen; *first*, In sin itself; and, *secondly*, In the indignation of God for it. Who can bear this indignation of his? Christ alone, and he hath borne it.

Yea, but you will say, Is not God offended at the sins of believers, when they do commit them? Hath Christ taken away the offence against sin by his death?

I answer, No; therefore do not mistake yourself; there may be easily a mistake for lack of serious pondering the words I deliver. I have not said, God is not offended with the sins that believers commit; but God stands not offended with the persons* of believers, for the sins committed by them. He hath that everlasting indignation against sin as ever. And as there is the same

[* Jonah iv. 6. 1 Kings xix. 4, 5.]

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ſame contrariety in ſin againſt his nature, ſo there is the ſame contrariety in God's nature unto ſin. All contrarieties have a mutual contrariety againſt each other; as water is contrary to fire, ſo fire is contrary to water; as ſin is contrary to the nature of God, ſo the nature of God is contrary to ſin: there is an abhorrency of God to that ſinfulneſs, but not an offence in God to the perſon that commits that ſin; becauſe the offence of God for that ſin hath ſpent itſelf upon the perſon of Chriſt; and, by having ſo ſpent itſelf, there remains none of it to light upon the perſon of a believer;* Chriſt having borne all this offence for ſin. And therefore as I ſaid before, either grant Chriſt hath ſatisfied the father, that he is pleaſed in his beloved ſon, according to Chriſt's own ſpeech; either grant this, or ſay, Chriſt hath not done all. In *Matt.* iii. is heard a voice from heaven, at the baptizing of Chriſt, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* He doth not ſay, *with whom* I am well pleaſed, but *in whom* I am well pleaſed; that is, in whom I am well pleaſed with you. Though in our natures, and in the ſinfulneſs of them, there is matter of diſpleaſure, yet in Chriſt, for all this, God is well pleaſed with us. And yet there is none of God's indignation againſt ſin loſt in all this, becauſe he is not offended at all with the believer: for he hath ſatisfied his own offence in his Son more fully than he would have ſatisfied it in our own perſons; we muſt have been everlaſtingly ſuffering, before God

[* 2 Sam. xii. 13.]

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would have been fully satisfied. Now, therefore, as the payment of a great sum all at one payment, and at a day, is a better payment, than by a penny a year, till a thousand years be out: mark what I say; so Christ's satisfying the Father at once, by one sacrifice of himself, is a better satisfying of him, than if we should have been infinite days in paying that which his justice requires, and his indignation to sin doth expect. So here is no derogation to the loathsome nature of sin, and the purity of God, and the great offence God takes at sin; but only here is the transaction of it from the person of a believer, to the person of Christ himself, that willingly took this upon him: and not only did he take it upon him, but it was according to the determinate counsel and purpose of God that he should do it; nay, the pleasure of God, *It pleased the Father to bruise him*, Isaiah liii. 10. So much briefly for the affection of wrath, and how much Christ is a way to take away that affection of God's wrath; that is, wrath simple, as it is an offence from him to a believer.

Secondly, Christ is a way to take away the effect of God's displeasure; Christ is the only way to take it away. *Shall I give the fruit of my body*, saith the prophet *Micah*, vi. 7, *for the sin of my soul? thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil?* No, alas! this will not buy out the penance of one sin, when he hath sinned; it is all too mean a price: there must be a better to take away that wrath; that is, the heavy punishment of God from a believer. I say a better price than this; not a dearer price to us poor men, but yet a more dear

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and acceptable price unto God; a price, in its nature, infinite and invaluable; but, of this price, not a farthing goes out of our purſe; there is the greatneſs. Chriſt is a way to take away all wrath, in reſpect of the heavy hand of God, which is the fruit of man's ſin.

In brief, beloved, the ſum plainly is this, Chriſt is ſo the way from wrath, that God doth never puniſh any believer, after he is a believer, for ſin; I ſay, God doth not puniſh for ſin.* This ſeems to be a harſh propoſition to many; but give me leave to clear what I ſay; and ſo, according to the clear evidence of truth, reject or receive what I deliver to you. In *Iſaiah* liii. 5. a chapter of moſt admirable excellency to ſet forth the wonderful and incomprehenſible benefit of Chriſt: obſerve it, *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*; mark the puniſhment; *He was bruiſed for our iniquities; the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him: and by his ſtripes we are healed.* Now, beloved, I will aſk but this queſtion; Are the wounds of Chriſt only part of our puniſhment? or, are they the whole of our puniſhment? The bruiſings of Chriſt, were they to be part of the puniſhment our ſins

* The reaſon is, becauſe the whole puniſhment, due to his ſins, has been borne by Chriſt, his ſurety for him; and to inflict puniſhment twice for the ſame ſins, once upon the ſurety, and again upon the believer, is contrary to the juſtice of God, as well as derogatory to the ſatisfaction of Chriſt; for either he has borne the whole of puniſhment, or only a part; if the whole, which is the truth, then none can be laid upon the believer; but, if only a part, Chriſt's ſatisfaction is not complete, and then the believer muſt be a co-bearer and co-ſaviour with Chriſt, as the Doctor obſerves; neither of which ought to be ſaid.

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deserved? If they were but part, we must bear the rest ourselves; but then, we must be co-saviours with Christ, co-bearers of indignation and wrath. *Isaiah* liii. 5, *He hath trodden the wine-press alone,* saith the text; *He looked for some that might help, and wondered, and there was none.* No creature in the world was able to be a helper with him.

I speak of believers only; they do not bear one lash of that deserved wrath, that is poured out for sin, not one lash or stroke; Christ trod it alone himself. Yea, but you will say unto me, Doth not God afflict his children and believers? All the world seeth and knoweth he doth; therefore, why speak you against this? Beloved, give me leave to ask you, Is there not a great deal of difference between God's afflicting believers, and punishing believers for sin?

Yea, but are not the afflictions of believers for sin?

I answer, No: afflictions are unto believers *from* sin, but not *for* sin.* What is the meaning of that, you will say? God, in afflicting believers, doth not intend to punish them, as now laying on them the desert of their sin, for that is laid upon Christ; but he doth afflict them in part to be a help to preserve them from sin: I say, All afflictions to believers are to keep them from sin, rather than punishment unto them for sin. Yet, some

* That is, they are not punishments for sins, or are in a way of vindictive wrath for them; but they are in love, and for the good of God's people; they are fatherly chastisements for sins, in order to take them away, or purge them from them, or prevent them, or preserve from them, as the Doctor afterwards explains himself.

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will ſay, No men in the world are afflicted, but their afflictions are for ſin; I anſwer, Yea, there are that have been. The diſciples put a queſtion to Chriſt, when the man was born blind; *Whether did this man ſin, or his parents, that he was born blind?* Saith Chriſt to them, *Neither he nor his parents:* not that neither of them had ſinned, but that neither he, nor his parents had any ſin, as a cauſe of that affliction or trial upon him; but that the power of God might be ſeen in him. So God, afflicting a believer, hath no reſpect unto ſin, as if he did afflict for ſin. For my own part, I cannot ſee how a man can ſay, Chriſt bore all the puniſhment of ſin, if we bear any of it ourſelves. And, if Chriſt did not bear it all, I cannot ſee how Chriſt can be a ſufficient Saviour, without ſome other to help him out, in that which he himſelf did not bear. I ſpeak all this, beloved, the rather becauſe when poor believers are croſſed and afflicted in any kind, they are preſently ready to ſuſpect, God hath caſt them off for their ſins, and is angry with them for ſinning againſt him. I ſay, in reſpect of ſin he hath committed, which he thus ſuſpects, there is not the leaſt drop of the diſpleaſure of God, not the fruit of ſuch diſpleaſure comes near him; *But every ſon whom I love, I rebuke and chaſten,* ſaith the Lord. God ſeeth that afflictions will purge, therefore he gives them. The father gives not his child a purge to make him ſick, but to take away ſome bad humours that made him ſick, and for the prevention of diſeaſes, or for the removal of ſome diſeaſe; that is the

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the father's end in purging the child: And this is the end why God afflicts his people; not for their ſins, but to take them away;* that is, to prevent the haſtineſs and inconſiderateneſs of a believer, that he may not be ſo raſh, running head-ſtrong in his own ways, but may be the more conſiderate for the time to come. It is moſt certainly true, beloved, that as ſoon as ever a perſon is a believer, he is ſo ingratiated into God, and with him, that there is nothing in the world from that inſtant, unto a believer, but mercy. God managing his mercy in his own way for the beſt to his; ſometimes by the rod, as well as by ſweet-meats; but ſtill he runs in a way of mercy. *All things ſhall work together for good;* this is God's way to believers. And if this could but be received of them; and that even then, when they are as gold caſt into the fire, that God, all that time they are in the fire, as the prophet *Malachi* ſpeaks, ſits *as a refiner;* then they would be more quiet in the expectation of that purity, in which they ſhall come forth, when the time of their coming forth is: when you ſee the refiner caſt his gold into the furnace, do you think he is angry with the gold, and means to caſt it away? No, he ſits as a refiner; that is, he ſtands warily over the fire, and over the gold, and looks unto it, that not one grain be loſt; and when the droſs is ſevered, he will out with it preſently, it ſhall be no longer there. Even ſo Chriſt ſits as a refiner; when once his gold ſhall have its droſs ſevered, then he takes out his gold,

[* Iſaiah xxvii. 9.]

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gold, and it becomes as gold ſeven times purified in the fire. But ſtill, I ſay, as a fruit of wrath, God never doth puniſh, or afflict, or chaſtiſe; (which word you may rather uſe, becauſe it is the ordinary phraſe of the goſpel) *Every ſon I love, I rebuke and chaſten.*

In brief, Chriſt is the way from wrath, not only in reſpect of the preſent, but alſo in reſpect of the future; I mean a way from everlaſting damnation. Give me a believer that hath ſet his footing truly in Chriſt, and he blaſphemes Chriſt that dares ſerve a writ of damnation upon that perſon. Suppoſe a believer be overtaken in a groſs ſin, it is a deſperate thing, in any man, ſo much as to ſerve a writ of damnation, upon this believer; it is abſolutely to fruſtrate, and make void the mediatorſhip and ſaviourſhip of Chriſt, to ſay, any believer (though he be fallen by infirmity) is in the eſtate of damnation.* And I ſay unto thee, thyſelf, whoever thou art, thou that art ready to charge damnation upon thyſelf, when thou art overtaken, thou doeſt the greateſt injury to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that can be: for in it thou directly overthroweſt the fulneſs of the grace of Chriſt, and the fulneſs of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt to the Father. Art thou a believer, and yet art thou in danger of damnation? Wherefore hath Chriſt ſuffered? Hath he died in vain? If he hath not died in vain, but hath borne thy damnation, how ſhall he pour forth this dam-

[* John v. 24. 1 Theſſ. i, 10. Rom. viii. 38, 39.]

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nation upon thee again, unleſs he be unjuſt? which is blaſphemy to ſpeak.

But you will ſay, this is preſumption; then may a man go on, and do what he liſt, there is no fear of damnation: this is the way to take the bridle from men, and make them kick up their heels, as the wild aſſes upon the mountains.

I anſwer, it is true, were a man to be guided by himſelf, and to order his own way, according to the pleaſure of his own will: but, beloved, you muſt know, that the ſame Chriſt that hath borne the wrath of the Father, and the effects thereof, doth free poor ſinners from damnation; the ſame Chriſt takes as ſtrict an order, to reſtrain and keep in the ſpirits of a man, as to ſave that man. Beloved, although a wild aſs, being looſe, runs at random, yet this aſs may be taken, and ſo tamed, that he may be ſet as looſe as he was before: yet he will not run unrulily as he did before, by virtue of his being tamed. It is true, our natures themſelves are mad, and, if they had the reins, would run wild; but you muſt know, that Chriſt breaks this wildneſs, and then he dare let a believer looſe to that, in reſpect of which, an unbeliever, a wicked man, would take advantage to ſin, *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19. Here the Lord diſcourſes of *Ephraim; I have heard* Ephraim *bemoaning of himſelf*, thus: *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke:* here is a wild bull, an unruly creature. You may be ſure *Ephraim* was thus: God hampers *Ephraim* well enough for all this;

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Convert thou me, and I ſhall be converted; ſo after I was converted, I was aſhamed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed and confounded within myſelf. Mark you, I pray, now let *Ephraim* looſe; alas! *Ephraim* is aſhamed. *Ephraim* would bluſh to look after that which he was mad after before; he is confounded within himſelf; he cannot tell which way to ſtir now, as before. Chriſt doth break the ſpirits of him; ſo that there is not now that licentiouſneſs in him, through the power of Chriſt, which was naturally in him, till the power of Chriſt came upon him.

Why muſt not hell and damnation be a bridle to keep men in, will you ſay?

I anſwer, mark what the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſalm* cx. 3, *Thy people ſhall be a willing people.* Here you ſee how tame the people of Chriſt are. Thy people are a willing people. How ſo? By fear of damnation? No ſuch thing, *But in the day of thy power, and in the beauty of holineſs,* they ſhall be a willing people. *Firſt,* the power of Chriſt comes over a perſon, that frames his ſpirit to a willingneſs and aptneſs; then comes the beauty of holineſs, that wins, perſuades, allures, and draws them to willingneſs; and where there is a willing ſpirit to walk with Chriſt, there is no danger of taking liberty. The philoſophers obſerve a rule, that the will is not compelled; a man cannot conſtrain his will. Let the will of a perſon but be to the pleaſure of Chriſt, nothing can conſtrain him to go beyond Chriſt; he may haply be overreached, and be over-taken, but he will never break

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break looſe; he will never run away, though the gate ſtands open on every ſide. The graſs and paſture are ſo ſweet that Chriſt hath put a believer into, that though there be no bounds to keep in ſuch a ſoul, yet it will never go out* of this fat paſture, to feed in a barren common. Therefore, in anſwer to the objectors, who naturally think there is a way open to ſuch licentiouſneſs, by taking away all wrath from a believer, and that therefore he will break into all manner of exceſs, I tell you, the power of Chriſt reſtrains him. Thus I have diſpatched the ſecond thing, from whence Chriſt is the way; he is the way from ſin and wrath; wrath in the affection, wrath in the effects of it.

I come now, in the next place, to conſider how Chriſt is the way, not only from ſin and wrath, but the way, and the only way, to grace and glory. Grace, in ſcripture, admits of a double acceptation, proper and improper. We uſually take grace for that which is improperly grace; for we commonly call grace thoſe divine qualities and virtues, and holy diſpoſitions and actions, wherewith we are poſſeſſed, by which we do improve and employ ourſelves in the world. This we uſually call grace; and in ſome ſenſe, it is grace: but that which is moſt properly grace, is nothing elſe but merely favour and bounty, and loving-kindneſs itſelf; and ſo, conſequently, all ſanctification is not ſo properly grace itſelf, as the fruit of grace; God firſt caſts his favour and loving-kindneſs upon a perſon, then

[* 1 Peter i. 5.]

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out of his favour flow the several fruits of his loving-kindness; and the fruits are those fruits of the spirit, frequently mentioned by the apostle. Now Christ is a way to grace in both these respects; Christ is a way to favour and loving-kindness in God; Christ is a way to all fruits or graces, as you call them.

He is a way to loving-kindness itself, and the favour of God: this loving-kindness and favour of God, consists in these branches; *first*, in a willing reconciliation of God, unto an alienated creature. A person is then said to be received into grace, when he hath been cast off, and forbidden to come near; as when princes cast men out of their favour, they confine them, and remove them from them, that they shall not be near the court: now when princes are pleased to cast a fresh aspect upon those persons again, and so call them to court, and to be friends with them, this is properly grace. So, beloved, after God seems to have cast off a person, and to put him far off from himself, and to remove him out of his sight, to confine him from coming near him; when he will return to him again, and will shew him the light of his countenance, that he did formerly hide, this is properly favour. The apostle, you shall find, doth expressly mention this reconciliation of God, and ascribes this grace merely unto Christ alone, *Ye who were sometimes afar off*, mark but the expression, *hath he made nigh by the blood of Christ*; here you see the ingratiating reconciliation by the blood of Christ. *God was*

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in Chriſt, ſaith the apoſtle, *reconciling the world unto himſelf; not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them; in Chriſt reconciling*, and therefore, *Chriſt is the mediator of a better covenant*, (as the apoſtle expreſſeth, *Heb.* viii.) Nay the apoſtle tells us expreſsly, he is the only mediator, and there is no other to reconcile men to God, but Chriſt alone; *There is but one mediator between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus.* So, we ſee plainly, to be at peace with God, there muſt be only the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that muſt make peace; he himſelf is the way. I remember a paſſage in *Job*, when there ſeemed to be a variance between God and him; firſt *Job* was at a pitiful ſtand, *I cannot anſwer him*, ſaith *Job*, ſpeaking of God; why ſo? *There is no days-man that may come in between us, that might lay his hand upon us both:* as much as to ſay, there is no hope of agreement with God, till another interpoſe himſelf, and be a days-man; that is, hath power over us both. Such effectual umpires between men are indifferent, and have both parties in difference in their power, to command the one, and the other; to command the creditor to yield, and to prevail with the debtor to pay as much as he is able; and this umpire is Chriſt alone.

There are many other expreſſions of God's grace, of his loving-kindneſs and favour, and it is plain, throughout the whole ſcripture, that Chriſt is the only way to all. As, to that adoption that the apoſtle ſpeaks of, (when he breaks out into admiration) ſaying, *Behold, what manner of love the*

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the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Is it a small matter to you (saith *David*, speaking to some of the servants of *Saul*, persuading him to marry the king's daughter) *seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law?* So say I to you, *Is it a small matter to you to be the sons of God?* Oh! great love! But this great grace and favour is only by Jesus Christ. In *Gal.* iv. 4, 5, it is plainly Christ that brings this grace of adoption, to make us sons; *In the fulness of time, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* Here you see, all that Christ doth, is to this end; that at length, through that he hath done, we might receive the adoption of sons. As Christ is a way unto the pure grace, and mere favour, and loving-kindness of God; so also unto all the fruits of grace, all the manifestations of it in the expression of God's loving-kindness in the fruits of the Spirit. To give you some instances:

The *first* of all these kinds of the grace of God, that he doth ever bestow upon a person, is, The opening his eyes to see himself filthy, and to see what he is: here begins a closing with Christ, to see a need of him, and to see the usefulness of him being received. Now mark this great business, of the opening of the eyes of a person, and you shall see he is a way unto it, *Isa.* xlii. 6, there the Father doth treat with Christ, and in his treaty he speaks thus to him, *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes.* You see this, it

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it is Christ that must open the blind eyes of men. Beloved, men are mistaken that think that the law makes them to see their own vileness; for a gracious sight of our vileness is the only work of Christ. The law is a looking-glass, able to represent the filthiness of a person; but the law gives not eyes to see that filthiness: bring a looking-glass, and set it before a blind man, he seeth no more spots in his face, than if he had none at all; though the glass be a good glass, yet the glass cannot give eyes; yet, if he had eyes, the glass might represent his filthiness. The apostle *James* compares the law to a looking-glass, and that is all the law can do, to have a faculty to represent; but it doth not give a faculty to see what it doth represent: it is Christ alone that doth open the eyes of men, to behold their own vileness and filthiness; and when Christ will open the eyes, then a man shall see himself what he is.

Secondly, Repentance is a great grace; yet you shall find, beloved, in *Acts* v. 31, that it is merely the work of Christ to give repentance unto men; *God hath exalted him to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance unto* Israel. It is Christ that grants repentance unto life; and if ever you will repent, with a kind repentance, either you must fetch it from Christ, he must be the way, or you must go without it.

Faith is a grace of graces, the root of all graces to believers; and this is properly Christ, and none but Christ, that works faith in a believer; the apostle speaks this expressly, *Heb.* xii. 2. *Look-*

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ing to Jeſus, the author and finiſher of our faith. He is the author, it is he that begets it.

Thirdly, Conſider the whole ſpiritual life; Chriſt is the only way to all ſpiritual life whatſoever. *I live,* (ſaith *Paul*) *yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* There is no life, but as Chriſt lives in men. Whence is the natural life of man? It is from the ſoul; the ſoul once ſeparated from the body, is dead; ſo long as the ſoul is united to the body, the man is alive; Chriſt is the life of every believing ſoul; Chriſt is he that frames and gives life to men. *Eph.* ii. 1, *Ye that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, hath he quickened;* he it is that quickens men when they are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. And in *John* v. 25. you have this admirable expreſſion, *That the time is coming, and now is, that the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear his voice ſhall live.* There is no life but by Chriſt alone; he is the way to all ſpiritual life whatſoever. So in brief, beloved, there is not a ſcrap (as you may ſay) pertaining to a Chriſtian, but it comes from Chriſt alone.

Fourthly, God hath therefore filled Chriſt full of all things, that we might fetch all from him. The apoſtle tells us expreſsly, *It pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* St. *John,* in the firſt chapter of his goſpel, tells us to what purpoſe he was *full of grace and truth,* ſaying, *And of his fulneſs we all receive, and grace for grace.* The Pſalmiſt, (*Pſalm* lxviii. 18.) hath this expreſſion,

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ſion, *Thou haſt received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them.* The apoſtle, quoting that text, turns the words thus; *Thou haſt given gifts to men:* it is as much as to ſay, that God bequeathed as much to Chriſt, as ſhall ſerve for his body; and this he diſtributes to the body, according to the proportionable need of it. The head is firſt the fountain, and hath all animal ſpirits planted in it; then doth it from itſelf derive all thoſe animal ſpirits to every part, from whence all have their ſeveral motions. So that, I ſay, the ſupply of all the believer's wants concerning grace, be it in matters of mortification of ſin, be it in the performance of duties of piety, mercy, and juſtice, or any other whatſoever, the ſupply of all muſt come from Chriſt alone, as he ſpeaks himſelf, *Rev.* i. 8, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end* of all things. *All my ſprings* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſalm* lxxxvii. 7.) *are in thee.* He ſpeaks of Chriſt in the name of God, as if God ſpake to Chriſt his ſon; *All my ſprings are in thee:* therefore you ſhall find God always dealing with men, as *Pharaoh* dealt in *Ægypt* with his own people; they came complaining of their wants to *Pharaoh: Go to* Joſeph, (*ſaith* Pharaoh) *hear what he ſaith;* he turns all over to *Joſeph.* Thus doth God deal with men: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him,* ſaith God the Father: therefore, Chriſt ſaith, *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:* ſo that Chriſt is judge alone; as Chriſt will diſpoſe of all things, ſo his Father ſets to his ſeal, and

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and under writes his hand, and never examines what Christ doth; but every deed that is signed by Christ, the Father without any more ado seals it, and manages all things by the hand of Christ: therefore, Christ saith, in the last of *Matthew*, *All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth.* The Father made all over to him, every thing. The truth is, beloved, the Godhead is absolutely a being of itself,* but this Godhead was pleased to unite the humanity to itself, and the Godhead having the humanity united to it, is one person.† Thus it pleased Christ to manage all things in the world, not in the Godhead alone, but as the Godhead hath the manhood united to it. You must not conceive, when God makes over the managing of things to Christ, that he sits still. But the Godhead hath now the manhood united to itself; so it is Christ, God and man, that works together; and, by this kind of way, there is nearer and better access for us unto God; because here is an humanity that is of some relation unto us, and so of near acquaintance with us. The Godhead, in its simple nature, is of too remote a distance, for us to come near.

Fifthly, Moreover, he is not only a way to grace, but the encreasing of it is in Christ. The apostle (*Col.* ii. 10.) tells us, that *we are complete in him, who is the head of the body, the head of all principalities*; not only that we have substance and

[* Deut. vi. 4.]

† That is, the Godhead, as subsisting in the Son of God, is a person of itself, and taking the humanity into union with it, both became one person.

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being, but that we are complete in him: and, in the latter end of the chapter, the apoſtle follows the alluſion of the head and body, and ſaith, that the *parts having nouriſhment miniſtred by joints, increaſe with the increaſe of God.* When the parts are united to the head, and the head through the veins and nerves conveys nouriſhment to thoſe parts, then the parts not only live, but increaſe with the increaſe of God. The apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* ii. 4. ſaith, *To whom coming as to a Living-Stone,* (ſpeaking to believers) *you as lively ſtones are built up a ſpiritual houſe:* he doth not ſay, ſtones that have life, but *lively ſtones;* they have more than bare life; nay, further, *as lively ſtones are built up* together. There is a growing up by the power of Chriſt, in coming to the *Living-Stone,* as the apoſtle doth there call him.

And that is not all neither; we have not only growth by the grace of Chriſt, but reſtoration* and recovery in caſe of relapſe. Suppoſe a believer fall, the ſame Chriſt that gave him life, and ſet him upon his legs, muſt raiſe him up again when he is down; *Though I fall, yet ſhall I not be caſt down,* ſaith he; that is, I ſhall not be left, but ſhall be raiſed again: *The ranſomed of the Lord* (Iſa. xxxv. 10.) *ſhall return unto* Sion, *they ſhall rejoice with everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall fly away.* They ſhall return to *Sion;* they were of *Sion* before: a man is not ſaid to return, except he were in the place before, and ſo is coming again; ſo the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return to *Sion.* How? they are the ranſomed of the

[* Pſalm xxiii. 3.]

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the Lord; it is the ransom of Christ, that brings them back from bondage to their *Sion* again; and when he brings them back, he brings them back *with everlasting joy upon their heads; they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing fly away.*

Thus I have endeavoured to declare the main thing, in what kind Christ is a way from a state of sin and wrath, to a state of grace.

I should have further considered what kind of way Christ is, and upon what grounds Christ is become such a way as he is; but I consider the season; I shall not therefore trespass upon your patience, though my fingers itch to be dealing in that which remains. There is abundance of excellency behind; Christ he is a free way; Christ is a near way; Christ is a way of quick riddance of all business, you have to do in the way; Christ is a firm way; there is no fear of sinking; Christ is a satisfying and pleasant way; *All thy ways are pleasantness;* Christ is a safe way, there is a continual guard and conduct in that way; Christ is an easy way to hit; *Way-faring men, though fools,* (saith *Isaiah*) *shall not err therein;* Christ is a spacious way, *Thou hast set my feet in a large room,* saith *David.* Now all this is founded upon the good pleasure of God; he will have Christ to be the way: it is founded upon the interest that Christ hath in God; it is founded upon the purchase of Christ, that hath bought this for man; it is likewise founded upon the conquest of Christ, as he makes his own way, and beats all off that keeps thee from finding this way; it is founded, *lastly,*

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upon his bowels to the ſons of men, that can never paſs over the gulph, till he hath made himſelf a bridge for them. Theſe things I ſhould have ſhewed you by ſetting forth the excellency of this way. But of theſe hereafter.

SERMON III.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

I Have a word or two to ſpeak more fully, if poſſible it may be, to ſatisfy ſuch as are not fully reſolved in the things I formerly delivered. Chriſt, I ſaid, is the way from wrath, from the wrath of the Father; from wrath in its affection, (as I may ſo ſpeak;) from wrath in the fruits of this affection of wrath. I delivered this poſition indeed: "The puniſhment, or the rod "of God, or rather chaſtiſement, is not *for* ſin, "but *from* ſin." Some ſtumble at the expreſſion, peradventure through miſtake. In brief, therefore,

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fore, beloved, to clear both myſelf and your judgments, if it be poſſible; when I ſay that believers are not afflicted for ſin, I mean thus; God, when he afflicts a believer, he hath not an eye to the deſert of his ſin, and thereupon doth lay part of this deſert upon his back; for Chriſt hath borne the whole deſert of ſin upon his own back. Whatſoever deſert of ſin the believer doth bear, Chriſt did not bear it, or elſe God takes ſatisfaction twice for one thing. Mark it well, I pray, beloved, if the Lord will ſcourge a believer, as now pouring out upon him what his tranſgreſſions hath deſerved, wherefore did Chriſt die? Chriſt died to ſatisfy for the fault of ſin; and, in his death, God was actually ſatisfied, as you ſhall find it in *Iſaiah* liii. *He beheld the travail of his ſoul, and he was ſatisfied with it.* With what was he ſatisfied? He was ſatisfied with *the travail of his ſoul;* with the burthen his ſoul bare, with the puniſhment of ſin that was upon him. If God was ſatisfied with the *travail of his ſoul,* how can God come to exact a new ſatisfaction by pouring out his wrath for ſin upon believers? To be ſatisfied, and to aſk more is a contradiction; either he was not ſatisfied, or, being ſatisfied, he could aſk no more. In brief, therefore, beloved, conſider thus much, there is not the leaſt action, or rather intention of any revenge, for a ſin committed, when the Lord in any kind afflicts his people: all the revenge, that ſin deſerves, Chriſt hath taken away and hath borne it upon his own back; and, therefore, he is ſaid to *ſave to the uttermoſt* (Heb. vii. 25.) *them that*

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that come to God by him. He ſaves to the utmoſt, ſaith the apoſtle: he hath not left a dram, nor a jot behind, not ſo much as the leaſt ſcatterings of wrath to light upon the head of a believer, for whoſe ſake he bare the indignation of the Lord. Whereupon the very nature of affliction in general is altered and changed; as death in particular: it was the wages of ſin at firſt; it is become the bed of reſt now; *They ſhall reſt in their beds, each in his uprightneſs,* ſaith the prophet. Afflictions were the rod of God's anger; they are now the gentle purges of a tender father. God heretofore afflicted for ſin, now God afflicts men from ſin; *This is all the fruit,* ſaith the prophet, *to take away his ſin:* not to take away the preſent ſin, as if affliction did make an end, and ſo blot out tranſgreſſion; this doth directly ſtrike at the heart of Chriſt himſelf.* But *this is all the fruit to take away ſin,* that is, to break off ſin, to prevent ſin. *Before I was afflicted* (ſaith *David*) *I went aſtray, but now have I learned to keep thy law:* therefore (ſaith he) *It is good for me that I have been afflicted;* in this regard, becauſe of prevention.

If you will but carry it clearly without carping, or a ſpirit that ſeeks contention and quarrelling, you never need to ſtumble at ſuch a poſition as this; for afflictions are the ſmiles of God, as gracious as the choiceſt embraces. God

* For it is Chriſt's work to take every preſent ſin from off the conſcience of the believer, by the application of his blood and ſacrifice; hence he is ſaid to be *the Lamb of God that taketh away,* that continues to take away, *the ſins of the world.*

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never manifeſts a loving ſtroking of a ſoul, more than he doth, when he afflicts it, to make his love appear in theſe afflictions. And the truth is, as Chriſt has purchaſed reſt and peace for believers, ſo he hath likewiſe purchaſed afflictions for them too; the wiſdom of God ſeeing afflictions as uſeful as dandlings themſelves: but ſtill, I ſay, this remains firm, that Chriſt is a way from all wrath whatſoever, as it is the manifeſtation of God's diſpleaſure unto the creatures ſinning; and thereby pouring out the deſert of this ſinfulneſs, or the fruit of the deſert of this ſinfulneſs, upon them. Chriſt is a way to the ſtate of grace; grace in reſpect of favour, grace in reſpect of the fruits thereof; and this we have diſpatched.

The next thing conſiderable is, *What kind of way Chriſt is to thoſe that come to the Father by him?* I ſhall ſpeak as briefly as poſſible I may. Take notice, in general, that the Lord hath laid out Chriſt as a way, with all the poſſible conveniences that may either win a people into this way, or ſatisfy and refreſh a people that are in this way;* he hath ſo furniſhed Chriſt, the way, with all poſſible accommodations, as there cannot be deviſed what the heart of man himſelf can deſire, but he ſhall find it in this way, Chriſt: ſo that all I ſhall ſpeak of this ſubject is, that as it may give abundance of light, ſo you may apply it all along, by way of motive to ſtir you up, to quicken you to ſet footing into this way, in reſpect of thoſe ſeveral conveniencies that do accompany it.

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[* Prov. ix. 1, 2, 3. Cant. v. 1.]

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In the *first* place, There is this great and ineffable excellency and accommodation in Christ, the way, that he is a free way for all comers to enter into, without any cause of fear, that they shall trespass by entering: he is a free way, I say: a way that costs nothing; a way barred up to no person whatsoever; a way whose gates are cast off from the hinges;* nay, rather, a way that hath no gates at all unto it; a cheap way to us; a costly way indeed unto the Father, and to Christ too. O beloved! a man might study a while to find out, whether there be more preciousness in Christ himself, as he is our way, or in the fitting of Christ to be our way. The person of Christ is invaluable, there is nothing to be compared with him: but considering him as our way to salvation, whether there be more preciousness in that, or in the fitting of him for it, is not so easy to determine. *Ye are bought with a price* (saith the apostle, 1 *Pet.* i. 18, 19.) *not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.* Observe it, I pray, that Christ might be a fit way for us to the Father, it cost the Father, and Christ himself that, in comparison of which, silver and gold, and the most precious things in the world, are called but corruptible things; which makes the apostle break out into a way of expostulation and admiration, rather than into a way of affirmation; *Oh! what manner of love is this, that the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!* Greater love than this can no man shew, than to lay down his life for his enemies. What did it cost

[* Psalm cvii. 16.]

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coſt the Father? It coſt him that, that was moſt precious to him of all things in the world; it coſt him his own Son, not a ceſſation of the being of his Son, but the bitterneſs of his Son: though a man doth not loſe his child, yet it goes to the heart of him to ſee his child tormented; much more when he himſelf muſt be forced to be the tormentor. *Abraham* thought God put him hard to it, when he muſt be the butcher, to ſlay his own and only ſon, his dear *Iſaac.* God, the Father, was put to it as much, nay, much more: in *Abraham* the thing was but offered, God would not have him do it actually; yet it went to his heart that he ſhould be appointed to do it; but it would have cut his heart if he had done it, if he had cut the throat of *Iſaac.* If nothing could content him before he had a child, *What wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* What would *Abraham* have ſaid, if receiving a child, he ſhould have been made a butcher to his own child? Yet the Father was put to this, to make Chriſt a way to believers: *He was his only beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed. Prov.* viii. 30, *I was daily his delight,* (ſpeaking of the Father and Chriſt under the notion of wiſdom) *I was his delight, rejoicing always before him in the habitable parts of his earth.* Muſt it not come near unto him to part with ſuch a Son? Nay, muſt it not go near to him, that he himſelf muſt not only be a ſpectator of all that cruelty, but the principal actor himſelf in the tragedy? He doth not only leave Chriſt to men, but when men could not fetch blood enough, he takes the rod

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rod into his own hand, and will fetch it himself from his beloved Son: *It pleased the Lord to bruise him,* saith the prophet, *Isa.* liii. 10. It did not only please the Lord, that men should bruise him; but *it pleased the Lord* himself *to bruise him.* It was a strange apprehension, that God should look upon the anguish of the soul of Christ, and, instead of breaking out into furiousness against the instruments of cruelty, he himself should be satisfied with beholding it; as much as to say, it did his heart good to see it; *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied;* not only satisfied towards men, but satisfied in himself: it gave him content to see the travail of his Son. Certainly, beloved, the bowels of God must infinitely be beyond the reach of the creature, towards a poor sinner, that he could go so far in a contrary way to his own Son; that there might be the fruit of these bowels to his enemies. One would think, God should rejoice to see the confusion of his enemies; and not rejoice to see the bitterness of the travail of the soul of his Son, that his enemies might escape scot-free: but this it cost the Father; he must not only behold, or allow the suffering of his Son, but he must be an actor of it himself: nay, he must be pleased in it.

Certainly, the Father was exceedingly pleased with it, because it doth commend the great end of the Father: the main end he drove at, was the salvation of sinners; and this, in his wisdom, he saw the fittest way; that it could not be done, but by this way; therefore it pleased him, in that his purpose

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purpoſe ſhould not be fruſtrate of his end. You know, when a man hath a great mind to a thing, if the way he goes in proſpers not, he is diſpleaſed; if it proſper, he is contented in it, he delights to ſee his buſineſs ſucceed; ſo was it with the Father.

You may ſee what it coſt Chriſt too, as well as the Father; the Father muſt reſign his part in his Son; a great matter, not only to part with him, in reſpect of death, but in a manner to part with him in life too; *My God, my God,* (ſaith Chriſt) *why haſt thou forſaken me?* Here, you ſee, God parts with him in life; and Chriſt muſt part with his life, as well as the Father muſt part with the Son; nay, in ſome manner, Chriſt muſt part with that which is better than his life, with the glory and majeſty of his divinity. He did not part with the eſſence of his divinity, but with the glory of it, he parted, as *Phil.* ii. 6, *Though he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he took upon him the form of a ſervant, and made himſelf of no reputation;* he did empty himſelf, as the meaning of the word is; he did put off and lay aſide the majeſty and glory he had, that he might ſeem to be a mere Carpenter's Son. For a king all his life-time to undergo the notion of a beggar, and not to recover out of this eſtate all his whole life, but even to lie down in this low condition in the grave, it would ſeem a great loſs unto him: man would reckon this a great matter, for a king to debaſe himſelf ſo low; it coſt Chriſt more than this; look upon all the ſufferings of Chriſt; look upon death itſelf; together with the reproach and

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ſhame of it. The death he died, was called, "A "curſed death of the croſs;" although he was not aſhamed, that is, he deſpiſed the ſhame; yet ſhame and reproach he muſt bear. So, if we look upon God and Chriſt, as making a way for men, it is not a free way, it is not a cheap way, but looking upon ourſelves, that have received the benefit of this way, and this Chriſt, it is a free way indeed, free for man, without any coſt or charge; free, as he is a way to all ſorts of men, none excepted, none prohibited; whoever will, may ſet footing in Chriſt. There is nothing can bar one perſon more than another, from entering into Chriſt as a way. I know, beloved, this ſeems harſh to the ears of ſome people, that there is no difference to be made among men, not only poor, as well as rich, but that the wicked, as well as godly, are admitted; that is ſtrange. But let me tell you, Chriſt is a free way for a drunkard, for a whore-maſter, for a harlot, an enemy to Chriſt; I ſay, Chriſt is as free a way for ſuch a perſon to enter into him,* as for the moſt godly perſon in the world. But do not miſtake me, I do not ſay, Chriſt is a free way to walk in him, and yet to continue in ſuch a condition; for Chriſt will never leave a perſon in ſuch a filthineſs, to whom he hath given to enter into himſelf: mark well what I ſay; but for en-

* That is, who has been ſuch a perſon; not that continues ſo, as is preſently obſerved: the ſenſe is, that ſuch are free to come to Chriſt, notwithſtanding their former life, and that without any conditions and qualifications fitting them for his acceptance; and ſo ſtand upon as good a foot, with reſpect to Chriſt's free and hearty admittance of them into him the way, as the moſt godly perſon in the world.

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trance into him, Christ is as free a way for the vilest sort of sinners, as for any person under heaven. If Christ hath given a heart to a sinner, to set footing into himself; that is, to receive, to take him for his Christ; if Christ hath given him a heart to take him for his Christ in reality, to take him truly and unfeignedly: Christ is a way for such a person to the Father, though he be the vilest person under heaven. And he is to him a way unto the Father, even while he is ungodly, before he is amended; and he may take his part in this Christ, as an ungodly person, as well as when he is righteous. In this regard, I say, Christ is a free way; God looks for nothing in the world from the sons of men, be they what kind of men soever, he looks for nothing from them, to have a right to Christ; but he did freely give Christ unto them, without considering of any thing that they might bring along with them.

Nay, more, God doth not only not look for any thing, but he will not take notice, nor regard any discouragements in men, to keep them from the inheritance, to keep him off from giving unto them a right unto Christ.

I would fain have this point cleared, and fully and exactly proved, because, I doubt, many persons will not receive it; but, I tell you, we must not be afraid to set forth the praise of the glory of God's grace, as fearing the squeamishness of some men: *first*, therefore, consider, that Christ is delivered over unto men, to be their way unto the Father, of mere gift, of free gift: what is freer

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freer than a gift? That Chriſt is delivered over to be a way to the Father, by a mere and abſolute gift, is moſt plainly expreſſed, *Iſaiah* xlii, *I will give thee*, ſaith the text, *to be a covenant to the people*. In matter of gift, what is there in the richeſt man in the world, more than in the verieſt beggar, to partake of it, ſuppoſing the thing that comes to him as a gift? A beggar can take a gift as well as the richeſt man; nay, a thief, that is condemned to the gallows, may receive a gift of the king, as well as the greateſt favourite in court; and, if any thing be tendered as a mere gift unto a thief, his very being a thief, and his being ready to be executed, is no prejudice in the world to bar him from participating of that which ſhall be beſtowed upon him as a gift: if Chriſt be a free gift unto men, then it muſt follow, to whom the Father will reach out Chriſt, there is nothing in that perſon to hinder the participating of him.

But ſome will ſay, though Chriſt be a gift, yet he is a gift upon condition.

I anſwer, I cannot ſay but there is a flat contradiction, to ſay he is a gift, and yet conditions required. What are the conditions in a covenant, but a mere bargain and ſale? I will do this, and thou ſhalt do that; do this, and thou ſhalt have that: what difference is there between this, and a bargain and ſale? That God ſhould require conditions of men, is but to receive Chriſt as upon bargain and ſale; but Chriſt muſt be really and actually a gift. When the king

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king gives a pardon to a thief, what are the conditions? Peradventure the thief can do his king ſervice, if his life be ſpared; but if his life be ſpared upon ſervice doing, it is not a gift, but a bargain, as much as to make a contract, thus, do ſuch a piece of ſervice, then life is yours. I ſay it derogates from the nature of a gift, that there ſhould be a condition required; and the goſpel, that is, Chriſt given over to men, cannot be ſaid to be freely given over to them, if man muſt buy him: miſtake me not, I ſpeak not all this while againſt holineſs and righteouſneſs, that becomes a people to whom Chriſt is a way; for holy and righteous they ſhall be; Chriſt will make them holy, and put his ſpirit into them, to change their hearts and to work upon their ſpirits; but this is not the condition required to partake of Chriſt; Chriſt himſelf gives himſelf, and then he beſtows theſe things when he is given. I ſay, Chriſt is given to men firſt, before they do any thing in the world; and all they do, they do by Chriſt preſent in them; *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* We do not ſo much live, but by the life of Chriſt, which is life in us. All the actions of life proceed from the ſoul, now preſent; how then comes the actions of the ſoul to be a condition to partake of the ſoul, that gives life, and, by its preſence, works ſuch actions? Chriſt is the ſoul of every believer, that animates, and acts the believer in all things whatſoever; muſt not this

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this life, Chriſt, be put into a believer, before he can actuate life, which is a ſtream ſprings from that life? how then can this be a condition to receive, to have Chriſt, when Chriſt is firſt come, by whom theſe things, that are called conditions, are afterwards wrought, he himſelf being preſent to work them? So, ſay I, God beſtows Chriſt upon men to be a way to bring them to the Father; he is an abſolute and free gift: there is no other motive that Chriſt ſhould be any one's ſaviour, than merely the good pleaſure of the Father, the bowels of God himſelf; *Not for thy ſake, but for my own ſake; not for thy ſake, thou art a rebellious and ſtubborn people, but for my own ſake.* Here is the freeneſs of Chriſt, to a perſon coming to him, when he comes merely for God's ſake; and God merely upon his good pleaſure will do it, becauſe he will; *He hath mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth: it is not in him that willeth,* (ſaith *Paul, Rom.* ix.) *nor in him that runneth, but in God that ſheweth mercy.* So that Chriſt becomes a way unto them, not out of their will, not out of their diſpoſition, not out of their holy walkings, but out of that mercy that proceeds out of the mere will of God; his own good pleaſure is the only fountain and ſpring of it. Beloved, I beſeech you, ſeriouſly ponder and conſider, that the goſpel is therefore called the goſpel, becauſe it is glad tidings unto men; and ſo the angel interpreted it, *Behold, I bring glad tidings.* Why glad tidings? In this reſpect glad, the poor ſinner, he is

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is a broken creature; nay more, he is a dead creature, *Ye, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* That life now is reached out unto ſuch a perſon, that is a dead perſon; herein it is plain, that there comes forth that grace from the Lord, that a creature being dead, who can act nothing towards life, yet he ſhall receive life. *The time is coming that the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it, ſhall live, John* v. 25. How come they by life! is there any action of theirs towards life? They are dead; it is the voice of the Son of God puts life into their dead ſouls; and it is glad tidings, that though the creature can do nothing,* yet Chriſt brings enough with him from the fountain of the Father, to beſtow upon them, to bring them to him. To ſhew you a plain ſcripture, that Chriſt becomes a way to the Father, merely as a free gift, without any thing in man required, look into *Iſaiah* lv. 1, *Ho, every one that thirſteth,* that is, every one that hath a mind, *come to the waters, he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come and buy wine and milk without money, and without price,* ſaith the prophet; and then he falls upon an objurgation in the next verſe; *Wherefore ſpend ye money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which ſatisfies not? Eat that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs: incline your ear, harken, and your ſoul ſhall live; I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of* David. Here is the cloſure of all;

[* John xv. 5. Iſaiah xxvi. 12.]

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doſt thou thirſt, that is, haſt thou a mind really to Chriſt, that Chriſt ſhould ſay really to thy ſoul, I am thy ſalvation? It may be thou doſt ſuſpect, ſaying within thyſelf, Chriſt is not my portion; I am not fit for Chriſt; I am a great ſinner, I muſt be holy firſt: this is bringing a price to Chriſt; but you muſt come without money, and without price: and what is this to come without money, and without price? It is nothing but to take the offer* of Chriſt, theſe waters of life, to take them merely and ſimply as a gift brought, and this is a ſure mercy indeed: theſe are the ſure mercies of *David*, when a man receives the things of Chriſt, only becauſe Chriſt gives them; not in regard to any action of ours, as the ground of taking them; I mean, in regard of any action of ours, that we muſt bring along with us, that muſt concur that we may partake of this gift. *Hoſea* xiv. 4: Chriſt ſpeaks there thus to his people, *I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely;* that is, I will love them for mine own ſake. *Rom.* iii. 23, 24. the apoſtle ſpeaks excellently concerning this free grace of God beſtowed in Chriſt upon them; *For all have ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God, being juſtified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt.* Mark, brethren, firſt he takes off all creatures, and all that a creature can do, *all have ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God*; then he ſhews how we ſhould partake of juſtification, namely, freely through Chriſt. *Rom.* v. The apoſtle ſpeaks at large concerning the

[* Rev. iii. 18. John vii. 37.]

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the participation of Chriſt, to be our Chriſt of mere free gift, where he makes a large compariſon of our participation of ſin from *Adam*, and of our participation of life from Chriſt; and ſtill in every paſſage, ſpeaking of participating of life from and by Chriſt, he comes in with theſe expreſſions of gift, and that it comes freely. *Rom.* v. 15, *But not as by the tranſgreſſion of one, ſo is the free gift; for if through the tranſgreſſion of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jeſus Chriſt, hath abounded unto many.* There is grace, and the gift by grace; ſo running in this expreſſion in the 17th verſe, he ſaith, *For if by the offence of one, death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in life by one Jeſus Chriſt.* Still, I ſay, obſerve it, that we partake of life in Chriſt, and by Chriſt; and it runs altogether upon this ſtrain, that it comes by mere gift.

Do but look in *Epheſ.* ii. 4—10, and there you ſhall perceive how clear and full the apoſtle is in this buſineſs, that Chriſt is made a way to life abſolutely and merely of free gift; *But God*, ſaith he, *who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt; by grace ye are ſaved: and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Jeſus Chriſt, that in the ages to come he might ſhew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindneſs towards us through Chriſt Jeſus.* Mark how he goes on; *For by grace are*

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ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Still he runs upon mercy and grace, and works he excludes, that no creature might boast.

If any thing were done on our part, to partake of Christ, we might have whereof to boast. So likewise speaking of *Abraham*, *Rom.* iv. 2, *For if* Abraham *were justified by works, he had whereof to glory:* we should have to glory, if we should have the least hand in the participating of Christ; therefore God would give Christ freely unto his creature; because man should have no stroke in participating of him, that so it might be to the praise of the glory of his grace; that we should not glory; yea, *That no flesh should glory in his presence.* And therefore the same apostle, *Ephes.* iii. 12. tells us, that from this grace *we have boldness, and access with confidence through the faith of him.* In regard that Christ is given unto men to be a way unto the Father, and merely of free gift, hence it is that we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Should we regard our own works or qualifications, there would be some mixture of distrust; we should have some fear that God would find out such and such a thought; therefore we could never come with boldness and confidence, if we did not come in Christ as a free gift bestowed upon us: for if there were one condition,* and the least

[* Rom. xi. 6. and iv. 16.]

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leaſt failing in that condition, God might take advantage upon that default, and ſo poſſibly we might miſcarry; and we being jealous and privy to it, that there are faults in all we do, we ſhould be *ſubject all our lives to bondage,* (ſaith the apoſtle) and ſhould fear that God will take advantage of all that which is undone on our part; and ſo not fulfil what he hath promiſed on his part. But ſeeing we have Chriſt beſtowed as a free gift of the Father, *we come with boldneſs and acceſs to the throne of grace.* To eſtabliſh, or a little more to clear this, look (*Heb.* x. 18, 19, 20.) *Now where remiſſion of ſin is, there is no more offering for ſin; having therefore boldneſs to enter into the holieſt, by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way that he hath conſecrated for us through the veil, that is to ſay, his fleſh.* How come we to have boldneſs? Through the new and living way made by the blood of Chriſt; not a new and living way by his blood and our actions, but by his blood; that is, only by his blood, merely by his actions; and ſo paſſed over freely to us; this is that which makes us come with ſo much boldneſs.

Look into the cloſure of all the ſcriptures, you ſhall find there can be nothing imagined more free; nay, ſo free, as the participating of Chriſt to be our way to the Father; nothing ſo free as this. (*Rev.* xxii. 17,) *Both the Spirit and the bride ſay, come; let him that heareth, ſay, come; and let him that is athirſt, come; and whoſoever will,* (mark the expreſſion) *let him take of the water of life freely.* Haſt thou but a mind to Chriſt? come and take

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the water of life freely; it is thine; it is given to thee; there is nothing looked for from thee to take thy portion in this Christ; thine he is as well as any person's under heaven: therefore, you shall find our Saviour exceedingly complain of this, as a great fault, *You will not come to me, that you might have life; He that comes to me, I will in no wise cast him off;* upon no terms. Thou mayest object a thousand things, that if thou shouldst come, and conclude Christ is thy Christ, he will reject thee, and that it will be but presumption; but, in so doing, thou rejectest thyself, and forsakest thy own mercy; but Christ saith, Whosoever he be, what person soever, *I will in no wise cast him off, if he come unto me.*

Secondly, As Christ is a free way, made over to men by free gift, without any thing in man to partake of this Christ, so he is a safe way to those that do take him: I say, Christ is a safe way, a secure way; here is no danger of miscarriage in Christ. Let men take any other way in the world to heaven, but Christ, and there are thousands of dangers, and thousands of ways to miscarry; but there is no way that a soul can possibly miscarry, that takes Christ for his way. *Satan hath desired to winnow thee*, saith Christ, *Luke* xxii. 31. speaking to *Peter, but I prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:* nay, he undertakes so, for them that come to him, *that the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.* Believers that receive Christ, have not only the guard of angels to secure them, but they have the guard of the Spirit of Christ, that

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that ſhall lead them; not only lead them into truth, but lead them into all truth. The Spirit will not take a believer and lead him by the hand, and ſet him into the way, (as a friend doth, to lead one a mile out of town, and then leave him alone to go the reſt of the way) no, but the Spirit leads him into truth, and into all truth; he will be a companion of the ſoul, to ſecure it; a conduct to the very harbour and haven itſelf. It is a privilege of this nation, that merchants may have a convoy, a navy royal, it may be to go out with them, but it will hardly come in with them; therefore there is not abſolute ſecurity in this convoy; but he that takes Chriſt, he hath the Spirit to go in and out before him; to go forth, to come back, to be all the way with him; nay, he hath given himſelf to be his protector, *I will never fail thee, nor forſake thee*, Heb. xiii. 4. In all other ways there may be danger, in reſpect of rubs, in reſpect of difficulties or troubles that may ariſe in them: but, do but look in *Iſa.* xxxv. you ſhall ſee what ſafety there is in this way Chriſt, unto thoſe that make choice of him, in reſpect of any danger that may lie in the way. *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. the prophet tells us, *That a highway there ſhall be, and that way ſhall be called the way of holineſs, and the unclean ſhall not paſs over.* And verſe 9, (mark the ſecurity) *No lion ſhall be there, nor any ravenous beaſt ſhall be found there; but the redeemed of the Lord ſhall walk there:* no lion, no ravenous beaſt, nothing to make them miſcarry. If a man haply travel through a wilderneſs, there may be bears and

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and lions; as in *New-England*, and in other foreign parts, they lie open to many dangers: ſo let a man chooſe righteouſneſs; I mean his own righteouſneſs, as his way to heaven: Oh! what a world of danger lies here! Satan hath continual advantage againſt him from that righteouſneſs; his own corrupt heart is ready to ſwallow him up; but there is no lion in the way, Chriſt.

Thirdly, As he is a ſafe way, ſo he is a lightſome way; Chriſt, I ſay, is a lightſome way to the Father. *Solomon* tells us, *It is a joyful thing for a man to behold the light of the ſun.* It is a great heavineſs and bitterneſs to the ſpirit of a traveller, to be benighted; to be overtaken with darkneſs is very uncomfortable; therefore, when we come to the ſummer-ſeaſons, they are the beſt ſeaſons for travellers, becauſe lightſome and long. All ways to the Father, but Chriſt, are mere darkneſs; nothing but darkneſs; Chriſt is the light of the world; *I am come a light into the world: He is that light, that lighteth every one that cometh into the world.*

Fourthly, Chriſt (and this is an excellent conſideration) is a near way; all that take him to come to the Father by him, have a ſhort way to the Father, in compariſon of any other way whatſoever: Chriſt is the ſtring, other ways are the bow; all other ways are compaſſes about; nay, they are labyrinths, in which men loſe themſelves, after they are wearied with toil; Chriſt is a near way to the Father; *He is nigh that juſtifieth me; who ſhall condemn me?* Iſa. l. 8. But more eſpecially obſerve,

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ſerve, how near a way Chriſt is to the Father: you have it excellently deſcribed in *Rom.* x. 6. *The righteouſneſs which is of faith,* (that is, of Chriſt) *ſpeaks on this wiſe, Say not in thine heart, who ſhall aſcend into heaven? That is, to bring Chriſt down from above; or who ſhall deſcend into the deep? That is, to bring up Chriſt again from the dead: but what ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; this is the word of faith which we preach.* Mark, when a man chooſes Chriſt for his way to the Father, there needs no clambering up to heaven to fetch down Chriſt, nor digging to the bottom of the deep to fetch him up; Chriſt is ſuch a way to the Father, that inſtead of bringing the man to the Father, he brings the Father down to him; *The word is nigh unto thee, even in thy heart.* Therefore, the apoſtle tells us, *You who were ſometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt,* Eph. ii. 13. Juſt as if there were ſuch a courſe taken, that the *Indies* (whence are all treaſures) ſhould be brought and ſet at the ſuburbs of *London*; juſt ſo doth Chriſt bring the Father unto men, and becomes ſuch a way, as that there is but one ſtep, from the loweſt condition of ſinfulneſs, to the higheſt of being a ſon of God. There is but one ſtep between the Father, and them that chooſe Chriſt to be the way. And therefore the firſt thing Chriſt preached, was this, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand:* what is that? It is preſent. You have heard much, I ſuppoſe, of your northern paſſage to the *Indies*; a great deal of time hath been ſpent to find ſuch a cut,

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a cut, that the voyage may be done in half the time. O look upon Christ, he is such a way to the Father, that the voyage is done in a step from a state of ungodliness, to the state of justification, to the state of salvation settled upon the soul. Christ is such a way, that there is but one step from one term to another. Look now but upon the old way of the law, there must be a continuance *in all things written in the book of the law to do them:* there must be a going on to perfection of righteousness, before men can come to justification unto life and salvation. This is a long way.

Now, how near hath Christ made the way unto the Father? thus near, *He that believeth, shall be saved.* Let me be bold to tell you, You are in as full an estate of justification before God; you are in as true a state of salvation, you that are believers, as they that are now already in heaven:* *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved*; such a near way is Christ.

Yet still people will be cavilling, Where are good works all this while? What, justified by faith alone! Saved by Christ alone! Let me tell you, if Christ be the way, works are not the way, except they be Christ.† But must not we work? Yea,

* That is, their state of salvation is real, and they are in as safe a state, and have as good a right and claim as the saints in heaven, though not in equal possession; they are heirs of it, kept unto it, and shall certainly enjoy it; and are as completely justified as they; and, therefore, their state of justification is as full.

† They are ways which God has ordained his people should walk in, in order to glorify and serve him, as follows, but not the way of salvation.

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but for other purpoſes; the Lord hath propounded other ends for which we are to work; *Ye are bought with a price,* (that is done) *therefore glorify God in your bodies and ſpirits: Being delivered,* (our ſafety it ſeems is paſt) *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we ſerve in holineſs and righteouſneſs, without fear before him, all the days of our life.* Do we ſerve towards deliverance? Then deliverance is not before ſerving; but ſaith *Zachariah, Being delivered, we ſerve,* Luke i. 74. *Firſt,* we are delivered from wrath, before we ſtep a ſtep into any duties whatſoever; we do not the duty to be delivered, but we do the duty becauſe we are delivered.

And, ſeeing all things are ſettled by Chriſt for us, of free gift, all we do is for Chriſt himſelf; I ſay, that we do, we do for Chriſt, not for ourſelves.* If we do it for ourſelves, we do but labour in vain. Suppoſe we could compaſs never ſo much good by doing, it is but labour in vain, it was compaſſed before hand for us. If a man will run a hundred miles for money, if that money be proffered to him before he ſtep out of his houſe, at his door, his journey is in vain; ſeeing he might have had it before he ſtepped out of his door; and that which was the end of his journey, might have been attained without troubling himſelf at all. Chriſt comes and brings juſtification, loving-kindneſs, and ſalvation, he lays them down, preſents them, delivers them to the heart; when we

* Not to obtain righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation to ourſelves, but for the honour and glory of Chriſt.

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are ungodly, he enters into covenant, that we should become his. What need then all this travel for life and salvation, seeing it is here already?

Obj. But, seeing we get nothing by it, this is a discouragement for men to work, may some say.

Anſ. It is true, it is a discouragement to all selfish men to work; and whether a man work or work not at all, it is all one, if it be but for himself; if a man work never so much, if he be wholly selfish for himself, God rejects it; but when a man will work for Christ, that hath a touch of the loving-kindness of Christ, and therefore stands ready to speak forth the praise of the glory of his grace that hath so freely saved him; for such a man to work, is as welcome to him for Christ's sake, as if he were to work for his own salvation. You have many ingenuous spirits in the world, who will be more free to serve a friend that hath already raised them, than others will be to serve a master, that they may be raised: there is a service of thankfulness, which usually is more cordial, more sedulous, than all mercenary services that are forced. This is the true service of a believer in serving Christ; his eye is to the glory of Christ, in regard of what Christ hath done already for him; and not in expectation of any thing Christ hath to do, which he hath not done. He looks upon all as perfectly done for him in the hand of Christ, and ready to be delivered out into his hand, as several occasions require: and being thus compleated by Christ, not to be mended by the creature, having nothing now to

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do for himſelf, all he doth, he doth for Chriſt. Thus you ſee Chriſt is a near way unto the Father; there cannot be poſſibly a nearer way; ſo that now there is a great deal of labour and bitterneſs ſaved: thus you may be encouraged to receive Chriſt for your way. There are ſome remarkable conſiderations in Chriſt, wherein he is our way, wherein we may receive him, wherein is abundance of comfort; but the time hath out-ſtripped me.

SERMON IV.

Chriſt the Only Way.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me.

THE next thing conſiderable is, what kind of way Chriſt is to the Father. *Firſt*, As you have heard already, he is a free way; there is not a bar ſet up againſt any perſon in the world, the way is open: it is a foul deluſion of Satan in the heart of any man whatſoever, to ſay, Chriſt doth not belong to me; I would fain have Chriſt, but I may

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I may not close with him; let this consideration be never so plausible, it is a false consideration; for there is no bar in the world, if there be but a heart to step into him. If a man have a mind to step into the king's highway, which is the subject's privilege, no man can say to him, you trespass in so doing: it is made to be common for all: so is Christ a common way to all sorts* of persons whatsoever, to whom there is a heart given to step into him.

Some are offended that I should say, Christ is a way even to the drunkard, and to the whoremonger; and the vilest sort of persons have as good a right to Christ for their way to the Father, and to apply Christ to themselves, as any. But, be not injurious to the grace of God; be not injurious to yourselves and others: what saith Christ himself, speaking to those justiciaries, the Pharisees, both devout and blameless men in their lives? even *that publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven, while they are shut out.* If we, the ministers of Jesus Christ, should preach that a whore hath right to lay hold upon the kingdom of God in Christ, to lay hold upon Christ for salvation; this would be counted a licentious doctrine. Take heed you cast not dirt into the face of Christ; *Publicans* (saith he) *and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven;* I say it, therefore, and say it boldly, the wickedest wretch that stands here at this present time in the presence of God, if the Lord hath but given a heart to that wicked wretch, now

* 1 Cor. vi. 11. Acts xvi. 14.]

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now at this inſtant, willingly to cloſe with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to take the Lord Jeſus Chriſt for his Chriſt, though he be now in the vileſt condition that ever he was in his life; I ſay, if he have a real willingneſs* at this inſtant, to cloſe with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, it gives him an abſolute, complete, and perfect intereſt in Chriſt; he is as much his Chriſt, as the Chriſt of a ſaint ſaved in glory. We are ready to run another ſtrange way: if a man have a little holineſs and righteouſneſs, he thinks now that in regard of that holineſs and righteouſneſs, he may without preſumption cloſe with Chriſt; he doth in this overthrow the way of the goſpel; *He came to ſave that which was loſt*, ſaith the text: but a perſon it ſeems muſt be *found* before he be ſaved. *He came not to call the righteous, but ſinners;* but a man muſt be righteous before he have to do with the calling of Chriſt: ſee now, whether this be with, or againſt the goſpel. Free grace therefore, even to ſinners, is no licentious doctrine, nor doth it a jot maintain the continuance in ſin. I ſay, therefore, Chriſt belongs to a man that cloſeth with him, though he be in his ſinfulneſs: Chriſt indeed waſhes, cleanſes, and adorns a perſon, when he is cloſed withal; but there is none clean, till Chriſt himſelf enters, who makes clean where he enters.

I thought good to ſpeak briefly thus much by way of addition to what I have delivered before: did I know the objections of perſons againſt what I delivered, I ſhould gladly endeavour to give ſatisfaction to them: but obſerve, you ſhall find the whole

[* Luke xxiii. 42.]

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whole ſtrain of the goſpel runs continually thus; *Chriſt came to ſave the loſt: he died for the ungodly: while we were ſinners, Chriſt died for us: he received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord might dwell among them;* and ſuch like, are the terms of the goſpel, upon which Chriſt is tendered to our ſouls. Now, then, I ſay, to every afflicted ſoul, art thou rebellious, an enemy, ungodly, a harlot, loſt? Nay, art thou worſe than enmity itſelf? if thou art not worſe, Chriſt came for thee, while thus, though no better: he comes to tender himſelf unto thee to take him, whilſt thou art thus, before thou art any better. Now if this be true, when Chriſt is reached out unto thy ſpirit, why art thou ſo doubtful? why wilt thou anſwer, no, I dare not cloſe with him, he belongs not to me? But, ſuppoſe, Chriſt ſhould ſpeak from heaven as audibly to thy ſpirit, as I do to thy ear, and ſay, Be of good cheer, as vile a ſinner as thou art, I am thy Chriſt; wouldſt thou cloſe with him then? ſhould that be goſpel indeed? I tell you, Chriſt cannot, Chriſt will not ſpeak more from heaven than he doth in his goſpel; if you find he ſpeaks in his goſpel, it is as much as if he ſpake it to your ſpirits from heaven. It was a deluſion of the rich man in the parable, he would have *Lazarus* go and tell his brethren from him in what torments he was: what ſaith *Abraham? If they will not hear* Moſes *and the prophets, neither will they hear if one ariſe from the dead,* Luke xvi. 31. I ſay unto you, if you will not hear the voice of the goſpel, neither would you hear the

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the voice of Chriſt ſpeaking to you; for you would ſuſpect whether it were Chriſt or no.

Well, but you will ſay, this is a way to lead men to a licentious courſe of life.

I ſay the contrary: it is the only way to lead men into a more enlarged way of holineſs, than any way in the world, and this I will declare by and by unto you.

We have further conſidered, that Chriſt is a ſafe way; that Chriſt is a lightſome way; that Chriſt is a near way; we cannot dwell upon theſe: we will go on to make good what I promiſed to you; the conſideration of Chriſt, as a free way, to all comers, is the only way to build men up in a more enlarged courſe of holineſs, and righteouſneſs, than all the devices in the world can raiſe them to. Let me tell you, the rareſt ſelf-denial, the frequenteſt prayer in the world, the greateſt ſtudy, the moſt beating down of the body by exacteſt faſtings, reckon what other graces you can, they come all ſhort to build up a man in obedience to the will of Chriſt; they all come ſhort of this one thing, to lay hold upon him as a man is a ſinner; and to receive it as an undoubted truth, that Chriſt is as much my Chriſt now, as he is the Chriſt of a ſaint in heaven. And this will further appear, if we enquire how Chriſt is ſuch a way, as there is no way, wherein there is a quicker and better riddance of the buſineſſes and employments believers ſhall have in the world, than in Chriſt. I will note one thing by the way, before I go on, to make clear this thing, and that

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is this; it is a received conceit among many perſons, that our obedience is the way to heaven; and though it be not, ſay they, *cauſa regnandi*, yet it is *via ad regnum*: though it be not the cauſe of our reign, yet it is the way to our kingdom.*

Pardon me, if I give you a hint or two of another thing before I go on: let me deliver you this poſition; there is no believer under heaven, doth come to heaven before he hath ſerved his generation: there is no man a believer, and hath received Chriſt, but after he hath received Chriſt, he is created in him unto good works, that he ſhould walk in them. He that ſprinkleth them with clean water, that they become clean from all their filthineſs, puts alſo a new ſpirit in them, and doth cauſe them to walk in his ſtatutes and teſtimonies; *He takes away their ſtony hearts, and gives them hearts of fleſh; he writes his law in their inward parts, and puts his fear into their hearts, that they do not depart from him.* So that I ſay in concluſion, ſanctification of life is an inſeparable com-

* This is a diſtinction of *Bernard*'s, which ſome divines are very fond of; though, I think, he only ſays, it is *via regni*, the way of the kingdom; ſo it may be the way or courſe of thoſe that belong to the kingdom, and yet not be the way to it: obedience and good works are to be performed by all thoſe that are in the way; they lie in the way, and are taken up and done by thoſe that are in it; but they themſelves are not the way, but Chriſt: and as the learned *Hœrnbeeck* obſerves, *Sum Controverſ.* l. 10. p. 716. The Doctor allows, in ſome following paſſages, that ſanctification of life is the buſineſs a believer has to do in his way Chriſt; and that good works are concomitant unto heaven to thoſe that ſhall come thither; and he alſo enumerates the ſeveral ends of doing good works, though not for ſalvation; which ſhews, that he was far from being an enemy to good works, or for giving into licentious practices.

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panion, with the juſtification of a perſon by the free grace of Chriſt. But withal, I muſt tell you, that all this ſanctification of life, is not a jot the way of that juſtified perſon unto heaven; it is the buſineſs a man hath to do in his way, Chriſt; but it is not the way itſelf to heaven:* if there be no more to clear it but the very text, it is enough: Chriſt here ſaith, *I am the way, no man cometh to the Father but by me:* now I aſk this queſtion, are our works of ſanctification Chriſt himſelf, or are they not? if they be Chriſt himſelf, then there are thouſands of Chriſts in the world: if they be not Chriſt, then there is no coming to the Father by them; becauſe the coming to the Father is by him alone, and by him as he is the ſole way.

Now what derogation is there in this unto works, to ſay, they are not the way to heaven; they are concomitant unto heaven, unto perſons that ſhall come thither: the truth is, ſince redemption is managed by Chriſt, the Lord hath pointed out other ends and purpoſes for our obedience, than ſalvation; ſalvation is not the end of any good work we do: the ends of our good works are, the manifeſtation of our obedience and ſubjection; the ſetting forth of the praiſe of the glory of the grace of God: and as it is the ſetting forth the praiſe of God's grace, ſo actual glorifying him in the world; the doing good to others, to be profitable to men; the meeting of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in them, where he will be found according to the promiſe: theſe are the ſpecial ends

[* Titus iii. 14. Matt. v. 16.]

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that obedience is ordained for; salvation* being settled firm before. All that I will endeavour to build up, is this, to keep the true prerogative of Christ to himself alone, and that no righteousness of man intrench upon those privileges that are only his. Take away any thing of Christ, and give it to any creature, and you deny Christ in part; you destroy the gospel, the life of which stands in the soleness and onelines of Christ, from the beginning to the end of our perfection.

Now, to come unto that which I promised; Christ, I say, is such a way unto men, that whosoever chooseth him for their way, by him they come to a quick riddance and dispatch of all the business of holiness and sanctification, which they are to do, while they are in Christ the way: as it is with merchants that go to sea, it may be the end of their voyage is the *Indies*; but they have business in *France*, *Holland*, *Spain*, or *Turkey*, and they put in there; their business is not the way to the end, but it is something they have in the way to do, before they come to their journey's end. All our obedience and righteousness are but so many several businesses here, which we are to dispatch, while we are in our way Christ, toward heaven; and while Christ is our way, he provides so for us that our business goes on. Now this Christ that we have chosen to be our way, is he alone that oils the wheels of our spirits, and puts them into a nimble frame. Therefore, (in 1 *Pet.* ii. 3.) *To whom coming* (saith the apostle) *as unto a Living-Stone*, (speaking of Christ) *ye as lively stones*

[* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. John xix. 30.]

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ſtones are built up: mark it, I pray you; Chriſt, being a *Living-Stone,* makes every one that comes to him *living:* he doth not only give life to a perſon to be active in doing, but he gives livelineſs to him to be nimble in activeneſs;* as we ſay, ſuch a man is a lively man, when he is quick in his buſineſs. The Lord Jeſus is as a ſtrong arm that draws a bow; the greater the ſtrength of the arm is, the ſwifter is the flight of the arrow, and the further the arrow reaches; a weak arm makes the arrow fly ſlowly, and fall quickly; the Lord Chriſt, being the ſtrength of every ſoul, he draws the bow with a mighty arm. Do but conceive the more qualmiſh or ſick any man is in his ſtomach, the more unapt ſuch a perſon is to labour, he is ſoon tired and ſpent: now from whence proceeds the qualmiſhneſs of the ſtomach? It proceeds from want of ſpirits, or from weakneſs of ſpirits: weakneſs of life is the occaſion of faintneſs in the ſtomach. But ſuppoſe there be a ſtrong life, ſtrong ſpirits in men, they are mighty to labour. Such is Chriſt our way, ſaith the apoſtle, *When Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appear, we ſhall appear with him in glory: I live, yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me.* Beloved, Chriſt is life itſelf; *In him was life, and that life was the light of the world.* There is no life, like the life of Chriſt; it is a fountain of life; all life that is beſides, is but the ſtream of that fountain. If, therefore, Chriſt be our life within us, according to the ſtrength of that life, ſuch is the ſtrength of the ſpirit. A great rooted tree you know, ſends up abundance of ſap into the

[* Pſalm cxix. 32.]

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the branches; whereas a small rooted tree feeds the branches leanly; the larger the root is, the larger the sap, and bigger the growth, and the fuller is the fruitfulness of the tree. Now Christ is a large root of the soul, where he is once received; and as he is such a root, so there are answerable spirits coming from him. Mark what the apostle saith, though he confesseth of himself, he could do nothing of himself; yet, saith he, *I am able to do all things by Christ that strengthens me;* yea, so able to do all things, that he confesseth to the praise of Christ's power, *When I am weak, then I am strong;* as if he had said, the stronger my strength is in myself, the weaker I am to any thing: but the less strength there is in me, the more strong am I in Christ: therefore he sends us to Christ for strength; *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* I beseech you, consider, if you would be active persons indeed, you must have it from him in whom all power and activeness consist. You that are poor maid-servants, or widows, you do but little in the world, your stock doth not reach far; but if you were married to a rich merchant, or some such great man, you could do much more; because by the marriage of such a man, you are interested into a large stock, and his stock is yours: so closing* once with the Lord Christ, the whole stock of Christ is yours; in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom, and riches and graces besides; *For it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell,* Col. i. 19. Now, when we have a great stock

[* Hosea ii. 19, 20. John i. 16.]

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ſtock to trade upon, there may be a great deal of doing; and, for lack of ſtock, there cannot be ſo much dealings; ſo, as there is a fulneſs of ſtock in Chriſt, there may be a fulneſs of activeneſs in you; eſpecially, when Chriſt doth give you, with that ſtock of life and ſtrength, a faculty of ability to act* that ſtock; when he gives not only ſtrength, but wiſdom to manage ſuch ſtrength unto advantage.

Beſides, Chriſt is ſuch a way, that the buſineſs you have to do in the way, ſhall be done by him exactly, completely, and neatly. There is never a ſchool-maſter in the world can teach the perfect trade of walking uprightly, but Chriſt alone; therefore in the new covenant, you ſhall find this one of the main clauſes, *They ſhall be all taught of God:* that is, that Chriſt who is God and man, the mediator of the new covenant.

Men are but bunglers, that are taught by any other but God. We that are the miniſters of the goſpel, leave you dunces in chriſtianity, in matters of practice, until the Lord Jeſus Chriſt come into that miniſtry, and, by his Spirit, teach your ſpirits; and then when he comes, you ſhall be exact in ſkilfulneſs; *I am wiſer than my teachers,* ſaith *David:* ſo when Chriſt comes to teach you, you ſhall be wiſe as your ſchool-maſter. Now if a ſchool-maſter cannot make true Latin, the ſcholar will hardly do it; if the ſcrivener cannot write well, the ſcholar will make but crow's-claws, as we uſed to ſay: learn this truth, if you will be exact in the chriſtian ſcholarſhip, in the myſteries of

[* 1 Chron. xxix. 14. Matt. xxv. 20. Phil. ii. 13.]

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of Chriſt; go to ſchool to Chriſt; that is, take Chriſt for your Chriſt; wait upon him to inſtruct you, to direct you, to make you ſkilful; then ſhall you be infinitely more exact, than by running to any other teacher in the world. Chriſt, then you ſee, is ſuch a way, by which we attain to a quicker riddance of all the buſineſs we have to do in this way, than any other courſe beſides.

Conſider in the next place, as Chriſt is a way of quick riddance, ſo he is a ſure way, a firm way, a hard way; there is no fear of ſinking while we keep this cauſeway, this road, as I may call it. Gluts of rain make ſome clayey, boggy ways, ſinking; both cart and man, and all, may ſtick faſt and ſink in them: as for Chriſt, he is a way ſo rocky, that all the rain that falls upon this way, runs away; it makes it never a jot the more ſinking. A man may be as firm, as ſecure in the greateſt ſtorm, as he ſhall be in the faireſt weather. I mean thus, Chriſt will not deceive; every thing in the world elſe will deceive a man, but Chriſt will never deceive him: you have obſerved, ſometimes, I know, ſome places that have been as green and fair to the eye, as the beſt way that ever men ſet foot into; but ſet your foot into them, and you ſink up to the neck, they are boggy quagmires. I muſt tell you, while men make their own righteouſneſs and obedience their way to the Father, they ſeem to be in a fair and green way, which promiſeth firmneſs; but he that dares to truſt himſelf in the way of his own righteouſneſs, to the Father, ſhall find himſelf ſo ſinking,

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ing, that if Chriſt come not and pluck him out, he ſhall ſink over head and ears. Ye that go to the Father, and think to ſet yourſelves in his preſence, and ſtand in his delight, in the way of your own righteouſneſs, ſhame and confuſion of face will cover you before you are aware. *Paul* durſt not be found in it, but looked upon it as dung; dung you know is ſinking; the righteouſneſs of *Paul* he ſaw it, he knew it, it did not only ſtink in the noſtrils of God as dung, but it was a ſinking way; he himſelf could never keep firm footing to go to the Father by it; therefore, he ſaith, *Phil.* iii. 8. 9, *I account all but dung, that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him; not having mine own righteouſneſs, that is according to the law, but the righteouſneſs that is by faith in Chriſt.* Let a man venture himſelf upon Chriſt, as he is a way to the Father, and he ſhall not ſink. *Fear not,* ſaith Chriſt, in *Iſaiah* xli. 10, *I am with thee, be not diſmayed, I am thy God; I will help thee, I will ſtrengthen thee, I will uphold thee, with the right-hand of my righteouſneſs: I will uphold thee;* all the righteouſneſs of man is not able to uphold him: nay, there is that in man's righteouſneſs that will ſink him: where there is ſinfulneſs in men's actions, in their righteouſneſs; that ſinfulneſs is enough to trip up their heels, to lay them in the dirt, to lay them flat upon their backs,* that they cannot riſe again. Let men come before God with this righteouſneſs, if God find fault with that in which they preſent themſelves, they are gone for ever: *Let a man keep the whole law, and at*

[* Rom. xi. 10.]

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at laſt fail in one point, he is guilty of all. See then how firmly he ſtands, that is built upon a rock. He that builds upon Chriſt, builds upon a rock; nothing can ſhake* him: he tranſgreſſes, it is true, but Chriſt carries away his tranſgreſſion, that before it comes to the eye of the Father, it is gone into the wilderneſs; *He caſts it behind his back, he throws it into the bottom of the ſea, it is blotted out,* as the text ſpeaks. So that ſtill, I ſay, as water falling upon a rocky way, glides away as faſt as it falls, that the way is as hard as before the rain fell, and a man may ſtand as firm there as before: ſo all our ſinfulneſs, while we are in the way Chriſt, as thick as it falls, Chriſt hath ſo made himſelf ſuch a way, that it paſſeth off from us to him, and from him alſo. We have garments made now a-days, that if rain falls it will glide off a man, and ſo not ſoak into him. Chriſt is our garment; all the wet that falls upon us, lights on him; it falls from us to Chriſt himſelf; that is, all our tranſgreſſions, when once we are in Chriſt, paſs from us† to him. Now he hath a garment as well for himſelf, as for us; that though our ſins fall from us to him, yet they remain not upon him. The Lord, indeed, laid the iniquities of all upon Chriſt; but he paſſed away all this iniquity from himſelf, by making full ſatisfaction to the Father. If Chriſt ſhould have our ſinfulneſs remaining upon him, when it glides from us, he himſelf would be a ſinking way to us. If Chriſt were ſinful in the eyes of God, we could never be clean in his eyes; it is through

[* Matt. vii. 25.] [† Zech. iii. 3. Iſaiah vi. 7.]

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through his cleanneſs we become clean. Now Chriſt is ſuch a way to believers that receive him, that he took away all their ſins from them, bore them all, and left them in his own grave, and raiſed himſelf without them. So here is no ſin charged upon believers, nor upon Chriſt; it was laid upon Chriſt, it is true, but he hath caſt it off, and ſweat* it out; it is evaporated and gone from him too.

Thus you ſee Chriſt is a firm way, a ſecure way, to a perſon; he ſhall not ſtir, he ſhall not be moved, as long as he keeps Chriſt to be his way. Once again, As Chriſt is a firm way to believers, ſo he is a moſt pleaſant way; I ſay, a moſt delightful, a moſt refreſhing and recreating way; Chriſt is a way, as if it were all ſtrewed with flowers; there is nothing but mirth and ſweetneſs in him. In *Prov.* iii. 17. there you ſhall find Chriſt ſpoken of, under the notion of wiſdom, of whom it is affirmed, *That her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs:* not only pleaſant ways, but ways of pleaſantneſs; as if there were nothing but pleaſures; as if the ways were ſubſtantial pleaſures, or full of all manner of delight. Do but obſerve a notable expreſſion in *Iſaiah* xxxv. 1, 2. he ſpeaks as if he had been an apoſtle in the time, or after the time of Chriſt: you may ſee, by him, what a pleaſant way Chriſt is to all thoſe that chooſe him for their way: in the 1ſt verſe, you have him expreſſing himſelf thus, *The wilderneſs and the ſolitary places ſhall be glad, and the deſart ſhall rejoice and bloſſom as the roſe.* He means thus, That whereas men lived as in

[* Luke xxii. 24.]

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in the wilderneſs, and in a deſart place; that is, in a ſad and ſolitary condition; they ſhall be tranſlated into ſuch a way, into ſuch a pleaſant way, that there ſhall be gladneſs and rejoicing; there ſhall be the bloſſom of roſes in this way. And to illuſtrate the pleaſantneſs of the way into which Chriſt tranſlates his, by tranſlating them into himſelf, he goes on in the 2d verſe, *It ſhall bloſſom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and ſinging: the glory of* Lebanon *ſhall be given unto it, the excellency of* Carmel *and* Sharon; *they ſhall ſee the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God;* nothing but pleaſure: it is compared to *Lebanon*, the ſweeteſt place in the world; to *Carmel* and *Sharon*, places of great delight: ſuch ſhall be the way chalked out, and held forth unto believers. Look into the laſt verſe of the chapter, and ſee what a way of pleaſure Chriſt is unto all thoſe that receive him; *And the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and come to* Sion *with ſongs and everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall fly away.* Behold the mirth that is in the way, Chriſt! there is nothing but joy and gladneſs.

But ſome will ſay, Believers find it otherwiſe: there is not ſuch joy and gladneſs, but they are often oppreſſed with ſadneſs and heavineſs of ſpirit.

I anſwer, There is not one fit of ſadneſs in any believer whatſoever, but he is out of the way Chriſt;* I mean, in fits of ſadneſs in reſpect of his

* That is, as to the enjoyment of him, as it is afterwards explained; or with reſpect to the exerciſe of faith, or comfortable walking

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his jealouſy of his preſent and future eſtate; he is out of the way of Chriſt, he enjoys not him as he ought, while he is in ſuch fits. Therefore, the apoſtle puts believers upon rejoicing always; *Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I ſay, rejoice, Phil.* iv. 4. There is matter of nothing but joy in him: while there is mourning in believers, there are meltings in thoſe mournings; and more joy in the mourning of a believer, than in all the mirth of a wicked man. I appeal to you, that have had melted hearts, whether you have not found a ſecret content in your meltings, that you rather fear the change of that mourning, than that you are troubled with it?

That, which is a moſt common proverb in the world, is moſt certainly true in this preſent caſe, "Some men for joy do weep, others for ſorrow "ſing." I ſay, believers weep for joy, and never mourn more kindly, than when they ſee the joy of the Holy Ghoſt, in the freeneſs and fulneſs of the Lord Chriſt, poured out upon them: there is never any more kindly mourning for ſin, than that mourning, when the ſoul is ſatisfied of forgiveneſs of ſins: I ſay, the ſoul is firſt ſatisfied with forgiveneſs of ſins, before there is that real kindly mourning in thoſe that are believers. You have heard of ſome perſons, I know, that have been condemned to be executed, who at the ſcaffold have been ſo obdurate, and ſtiff-necked, that not a cry, not a tear came from them; yet, juſt when their necks

walking in the way, Chriſt, as becomes a believer; otherwiſe he that is once in Chriſt is always ſo; he can never be out of him, as to intereſt in him, and ſalvation by him.

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went to the block, upon the coming of the pardon, when they were discharged, they that could not weep a tear, nor be affected with their estate, no sooner do they see a pardon, and themselves acquitted, but they melt all into tears: so it is with believers, the more they see Christ in the pardon of sin, and the love of God in Christ to receive and embrace them, the more they melt. Therefore, *Solomon* hath a notable expression; *If thine enemy hunger*, (saith he) *give him bread; and, if he thirst, give him drink; so shalt thou heap coals of fire upon his head*, Prov. xxv. 21, 22. As much as if he should have said, Kindness is the best way in the world to melt the most obdurate wretch. Thus God deals with men through Christ; he gives them bread when they are hungry, and drink when they are thirsty; and thus he heaps coals of fire upon their heads; that is, he melts them.

So, you see, what an admirable way Christ is, all full of pleasure; there is the Spirit of Christ to make music unto a soul. *Speak comfortably unto my people*, saith God: and this is the office of the Spirit, and the Spirit doth nothing else but speak comfortable things. Christ is a way, as the cellars of wine are unto drunkards, that are never better than when they are at the cup; and, therefore, no place like the cellar, where there is fulness of wine always to be tipling and drinking: I say, Christ is such a way; and let it not be offensive to say so, for the church speaks in the same language, *Cant.* ii. 4, 5, *He brought me* (saith she) *into his wine-cellar; stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples, for*

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for I am ſick of love. Chriſt hath ſuch variety of delicates ſerved in continually, and ſuch ſweetneſs in this variety, that the ſoul is no longer ſatisfied than it is with Chriſt. Here is not ſtaying with cups, much leſs with half cups, but ſtaying with whole flaggons; there is a kind of inebriating, whereby Chriſt doth, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, make believers, that keep him company, ſpiritually drunk; he overcomes them with his wine. *In that day, ſaith the Lord, I will make a feaſt of fat things, full of marrow, of wine well refined upon the lees, Iſaiah* xxv. 6. Here is abundance, it is a feaſt, and *a feaſt of fat things full of marrow,* which is the beſt of fatneſs; a feaſt *of wine well refined upon the lees,* pure and clarified wines; this is the entertainment Chriſt hath for thoſe that keep him company. The Pſalmiſt, in *Pſalm* xxxvi. 7, 8. hath an excellent expreſſion to this purpoſe, (ſpeaking of the excellency of Chriſt) ſaith he, *Therefore the ſons of men ſhall put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings:* well, what follows, when they put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings, that is, when they ſhall make choice of him to be their way; *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe; thou ſhalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleaſure.* Mark, *of thine,* for (ſaith he) *With thee is the well of life:* here are not only pleaſures, but rivers of pleaſures; here is not only life, but a well of life; ſuch dainties and delicates, ſuch curioſities and rarities, as the world can never ſhew, nor ſee, nor taſte. We read in the *Revelations,* of *a white ſtone, and a new name*

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name written in it, which none could know, nor read, but he that had it. This I am sure of, there are delights in Christ, none can possibly reach unto, but those to whom Christ doth give himself, and those that receive him: therefore, in *Matt.* xi. 25. our Saviour thanks his Father thus; *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, because it pleased thee.* And it is worth observing, he doth not thank him, that he hath revealed them to the mighty, and great, and wise, that abound in all manner of abilities far above others, but *unto babes;* there is much in that phrase; a babe is the weakest of all sorts of men; implying thus much, that the weakest of all believers, in the body of Christ, as I may say, the feebleſt babe, shall partake of such hidden things, such excellencies of Christ, that all the world shall never be able to dive into, reach, nor comprehend; and Christ himself takes such delight in their societies, that he takes occasion to bless God, the Father, that he is so large for his sake, to do so much for them, above what he did for others. So you see, Christ is also a pleasant way, a way of exceeding great content and delight; there is yet one thing more.

Christ is a way, of all the ways in the world the most easy to be hit; there is no difficulty to find it out, nor to find out a progress in it. Many ways may lead unto a comfortable end; but there are so many cross ways to turn men out, that they lose themselves. In the way of works a man may presently

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preſently loſe himſelf; there is not one work he doth, but he commits ſin in it, and ſo he preſently ſteps aſide, and loſes himſelf, and muſt begin again, and go about, and come where he was at firſt. God will never let any ſoul come near unto him, that comes to him with any ſin whatſoever; if there be any one ſin, all muſt be undone, a man muſt begin again, as they ſay. I ſpeak this of the righteouſneſs of man, while he makes that his way to God. Therefore Chriſt is the way; there is no ſtepping aſide in Chriſt, no loſing of him. There cannot be an error committed, which, when a man comes to the Father by Chriſt, ſhall be taken notice of, as an error from that perſon: ſo, I ſay, it is the eaſieſt way in the world to hit. It is true what *Peter* ſaith of *Paul*, *Many things in his writings are very hard to be underſtood*; but mark, in the goſpel, things that do pertain unto the juſtification of a ſinner, are written in ſuch great and plain letters, that he that runs may read them. Do but obſerve a few expreſſions, which ſhew how eaſy it is to hit the way, Chriſt himſelf being the way; in *Iſa.* xxxv. 8, *A highway there ſhall be, and the wayfaring men, though fools, ſhall not err therein.* The Pſalmiſt tells us, that *the commandments of God give light unto the eyes*; the goſpel out of queſtion makes the ſimple wiſe: there are ſome things you know, that you are able to teach fools; though you are not able to teach them deep myſteries.

Beloved, Chriſt the way to ſalvation, makes himſelf ſo plain to thoſe that come unto him, that

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though they be very fools, yet they shall not mistake, nor err; nay, though fools and wayfaring men: a wise man, if he be a wayfaring man, that is, a stranger, may miss his way; but if a man be a stranger, and a fool too, it must be a very easy way that he hits. A fool may hit a way in which he hath long conversed, which strangers may easily miss; but, saith the Holy Ghost, the way that Christ is made to men, is such a way, that *fools, though wayfaring men, shall not err therein.*

Again, Christ is the way, and such a way, as is a spacious, large, elbow-room way, as I may so say: there is abundance of largeness and elbow-room in Christ the way to the Father; therefore Christ himself saith, *If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed.* When Christ comes to bring liberty to men, then they are at liberty indeed: therefore, it is said, *Gal.* v. 1, *Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not intangled again with the yoke of bondage:* when a man enters into Christ, he enters into liberty and freedom; there is a contracted bondage in every way and condition but in Christ alone.

But some will say, How do you answer that place in *Matt.* vii. 14, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it?* How can Christ be such a way of liberty, when the way is said to be an exceeding strait and narrow way?

I answer, (first mark the words that go before) Christ speaks not this simply, but comparatively; the way is strait and narrow, in comparison of that

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he ſpeaks of; for the words before are, *Broad is the way, and wide is the gate, that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be that enter in thereat:* then he comes in afterwards with theſe; *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life;* that is, in compariſon of the vaſt liberty and ſcope the world takes to walk in, and the vaſt rangings of their vain hearts, it is a ſtrait way; but, ſimply conſidering him in himſelf, he is a large way; large in reſpect of the number that go in it, and in reſpect of the elbow-room in it. In a narrow way, few can go a-breaſt, it will hold but a few men; but, in open broad ways, many may go together. Mark, now, how Chriſt is a large and ſpacious way; *He died not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world,* 1 John ii. 2.* See what a ſpaciouſneſs there is in Chriſt, that the whole world, the multitude of people of all ſorts

* The deſign of the apoſtle in theſe words, is to comfort his *little children* with the advocacy and propitiatory ſacrifice of Chriſt, who might fall into ſin, through weakneſs and inadvertency: but what comfort would it yield to a diſtreſſed mind, to be told that Chriſt was a propitiation, not only for the ſins of the apoſtles and other ſaints, but for the ſins of every individual in the world, even of thoſe that are in hell? Would it not be natural for perſons in ſuch circumſtances, to argue rather againſt, than for themſelves, and conclude, that ſeeing perſons might be damned notwithſtanding the propitiatory ſacrifice of Chriſt, that this might and would be their caſe.

In the writings of the apoſtle *John*, the word *world* admits of a variety of ſenſes; and therefore the ſenſe of it in one place cannot be the rule for the interpretation of it in another; which can only be fixed as the text or context determine: ſometimes it ſignifies the whole univerſe of created beings, *John* i. 10. ſometimes the habitable earth, *John* xvi. 28. ſometimes the inhabitants of it, *John* i. 10. ſometimes unconverted perſons, both

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ſorts in the world, may have elbow-room in this way.

But, *ſecondly, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way:* what is this ſtraitneſs? to this queſtion perhaps you will anſwer, a ſtrict, auſtere, and ſevere life; a preciſeneſs and exactneſs without giving to a man's ſelf any liberty whatſoever: this is the ſtraitneſs of the way, that leadeth unto life. But give me leave to add, I confeſs the ſtricter chriſtians can walk, the better; and Chriſt will more and more confine the life of a believer unto a holy exactneſs; but, under favour, I conceive, this is not the meaning of the text here, that by the ſtraitneſs of the way, is meant ſtrictneſs of converſation: but rather the meaning is, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way;* that is, it hath not that latitude in it, that generally men think it hath. What is that? men generally

elect and reprobate, *John* xv. 19. ſometimes the worſer part of the world, the wicked, *John* xvii. 9. ſometimes the better part, the elect, *John* i. 29. and vi. 33, 51. ſometimes a number of perſons, and that a ſmall one in compariſon of the reſt of mankind, *John* xii. 19. in one place it is uſed three times, and in ſo many ſenſes, *John* i. 10. *he*, i. e. Chriſt, *was in the world*, the habitable earth, and *the world*, the whole univerſe, *was made by him*; and *the world*, the inhabitants of the earth, *knew him not*; and which is not to be underſtood of them all; for there were ſome, though few, who did know him: and I will venture to affirm, that the word *world* is always uſed in the apoſtle *John*'s writings, in a reſtrictive and limited ſenſe, for ſome only; unleſs when it deſigns the whole univerſe, or habitable earth, ſenſes which are out of the queſtion; for none will ſay Chriſt died for the ſun, moon, and ſtars, for fiſhes, fowls, brutes, ſticks and ſtones; and that it is never uſed to ſignify every individual of mankind that has been, is, or ſhall be in the world; in which ſenſe it ought to be proved it is uſed, if any argument can be concluded from it in favour of general redemption.

think,

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think, that beſides Chriſt, there is ſomething more in the way that leadeth to life, and that is a man's own righteouſneſs; not only Chriſt, but a man's own righteouſneſs jointly together with Chriſt; theſe are the way to ſalvation: this is the conceit of many men; but I ſay, it is ſtrait and narrow, in this regard, that all a man's own righteouſneſs muſt be cut out of the way; it muſt be ſo narrow, that there muſt be nothing in the way, but Chriſt; when a man's own righteouſneſs is taken into the way, beſides Chriſt, then it is a broader way than Chriſt allows of; he allows only that way to * himſelf. And that this is the meaning, ſeems to me by the words that follow: *Beware* (ſaith Chriſt in the next words) *of falſe prophets, that come in ſheep's cloathing, that inwardly are ravening wolves*: it ſeems, in this Chriſt gives

* Mr. *Anthony Burgeſs*, in his *Vindicæ Legis*, p. 32, finds great fault with the Doctor's ſenſe of *Matt.* vii. 13. 14. applying the words to Chriſt, which he repreſents as a forced interpretation of them; whereas nothing is more eaſy and natural, for, as Chriſt elſewhere calls himſelf a door, and a way, *John* x. 9. and xiv. 6. why not here a gate and a way? Moreover, if any thing beſides Chriſt is here meant, there muſt be more ways than one to heaven, and Chriſt could not be the only way; for certain it is, that the way here ſpoken of leads to eternal life, for nothing elſe can be meant by life: and as to what this writer ſays, that then by the oppoſition, not wickedneſs, but the devil himſelf would be the broad way; it may be replied, that not the devil only is oppoſed to Chriſt, but every thing that is wicked, yea that has the appearance of good, but is not really ſo; and the broad way may very well be thought to take in the devil, and all his luſts, which men will do, and walk in; and not only open vice and prophaneneſs, but all the falſe guiſes of religion and holineſs, and a man's own polluted and phariſaical righteouſneſs, to which Chriſt and his righteouſneſs ſtand oppoſed. *Matt.* v. 20.

a warn-

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a warning, how to beware of false prophets, by telling men, *That strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to life:* And what false prophets were they? if you consult with *Luke, Acts* xv. 1—24. you shall understand who these false prophets were, and withal, the meaning of this text: there you shall find that these false prophets were they that troubled the church, and occasioned that assembly, the first council that ever was: some (say the council) *that went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, you must be circumcised, and keep the law, or else you cannot be saved:* these are the false prophets Christ meant, that would make the observation of the law of *Moses*, and circumcision, to be co-partners with Christ, as a way to salvation; to whom say the apostles, *We gave no such commandment.* You shall find that in the epistles to the *Galatians* and *Colossians*, all the apostle's contests were with such *false prophets that came in sheep's cloathing;* they were not false prophets that came in wolves' habits, that are openly prophane and scandalous; they can deceive no man, they shew themselves to all; but they are *false prophets in sheep's cloathing;* that is, they seem to be sheep, they seem to be austere; they seem to preach nothing but righteousness and holiness; but yet they are ravenous wolves; how so? they make men build upon their own righteousness, and not upon Christ, and so destroy poor souls: these are those the apostle bids us beware of, in *Gal.* iii. 1, 2, 3, *Who,* saith he, *hath bewitched you, that*

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that ye ſhould not obey the truth, before whoſe eyes Jeſus Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the fleſh? Thus he argues againſt the falſe prophets, that will eſtabliſh the righteouſneſs of man, as the way to life.

In a word or two, there are two things more conſiderable, I will but touch them; Chriſt is a ſhady way; in hot weather, men much deſire ſhady places: you know the caſe of *Jonah*, when he was ſcorched with heat, God provided for him a gourd, and how comfortable was it upon him? Chriſt is a ſhady way: *Hide thyſelf for a little moment, till the indignation be over-paſt*, ſaith Chriſt, *Iſa.* xxvi. 20. When the ſcorching glooms of God's wrath break out into the world, Jeſus Chriſt is a hiding place, *till the indignation be over-paſt.*

Again, Chriſt is a quiet * way; there are ſome private ways men affect, becauſe there is but little diſturbance; but in ſome other ways, eſpecially in ſome common road-ways, there is nothing but quarrelling and revelling; but Chriſt, he is a quiet way; all is peace while you are in Chriſt; *The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. believe, and there is all peace for you; *being juſtified* (Rom. v. 1.) that is while you are in Chriſt to juſtify you, there is

[* Iſaiah xxxii. 17.]

Peace

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Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and nothing but peace. I see the time is past; something else I should have considered, especially the ground why Christ is such a way, but I shall rather break off abruptly.

SERMON V.

Christ's Pre-eminence.

COLOSSIANS i. 18.

That in all things He might have the pre-eminence.

THIS admirable, sweet, and comfortable apostle of the Gentiles, makes it the masterpiece of his apostleship, to woo and win people unto Christ: *We are the ambassadors of Christ, beseeching you, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled unto God:* as in all the rest of his epistles, so especially in this, and more especially in this 1st chapter, he shews an excellent faculty he hath this way, in this business of wooing people to come to Christ: he observes what most effectually takes with people to beguile their spirits, as he speaks himself, with a kind of craft to catch their affections;

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affections; especially, if you observe from the 15th verse of this chapter, and so on, you shall find, the apostle meets with every thing that is most enamouring and taking with the people. The world is mightily taken with beauty, with completeness of person; Oh! saith one, let me have a beautiful person, it is no matter how poor: if beauty be so taking, then, saith the apostle, I will present a rare piece indeed to you, in presenting Christ; for such is the beauty of Christ, that there is no beauty like his; he (saith he) is *The image of the invisible God*; that is one commendation of his. But, will some say, so is every man as well as Christ; what rareness is there in Christ in this regard? It is true, man is after the image of God, but where the apostle calls him *The image of the invisible God*, he speaks in an eminent manner; therefore, you shall find him expressing himself more fully, in setting forth the rare beauty of Christ, in *Heb.* i. 3, *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.* He is the image of God to the life, as I may say; he is so like him, you cannot know one from the other: he hath so the perfections of God, that there can be nothing more like than he is unto the Father, expressing the brightness of his glory. But there are some, though they find beauty, yet that alone will not take; besides that, some men look for lineage, what stock a person is of: is he come of a good house, of a noble and royal blood? blood is a great matter, especially with high spirits. Well, if this will take, then there is no stock like this

this of Christ; he is of the greatest house in the world: *The first-born** (saith the apostle) *of every creature:* he comes of that great house, of God himself.

And so doth the creature too, you will say; what rarity is there in Christ above the creatures? they all come of God.

I answer; But, beloved, the creatures are of, and in the house of God, as the apostle speaks of *Moses*, in *Heb.* iii. 5, *As servants in the house;* Christ as a son; Christ is not only of a royal house, but he is born of that royal house; he is the natural Son of the Father, *This is my beloved Son;* so that he is of the very blood-royal; (as I may so say with reverence) and he is not a younger brother in this house neither, for he is the first-begotten of the house; that is a great matter, among persons, to marry the heir of a family; so he is. Nay, more than that, he is the only-begotten of the house; there is never another in all the family; and that is a great encouragement, he is *the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth,* saith the apostle, *John* i. 14. So that if men go all the world over, to find a match in the noblest house, they will never meet with such a one as this of the Son of God. Thus he commends him. But yet some are ready to say, "Suppose he be of a noble house, he may be in disgrace, and he may live privately, and have no authority, nor be able to do any great matters." If this will do, then

* He is the *first parent*, or bringer forth of every creature into being, as the word will bear to be rendered.

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the apoſtle commends Chriſt as the rareſt, in reſpect of his power and authority; *All things were made by him, and for him;* that is, all things in the world are at his command and beck; they bow unto him, they ſtoop before him; *At his name every knee ſhall bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;* every thing goes through his hands.

Yea, but it may be, will ſome ſay, he is in diſgrace in court, that is a blur upon him.

I anſwer, No, he is not ſo great in the country, but he is as great in the court too; for, as he hath the whole world under his power, ſo he hath the great king at his beck; he commands in heaven, as he doth upon earth; there is nothing he can aſk of the Father, but it is anſwered; he never has a nay; if any come to be ſuitor to him to put up a petition, he is ſure to ſpeed.

But, for all this, he may be but a poor man, though he have never ſo great power in court and country; if he be poor, I ſhall live but poorly with him; if he were rich, and had abundance of wealth, then there were ſome hope, ſome encouragement to take ſuch an one.

I anſwer, Chriſt is not greater in court and country, than he is rich in treaſure; ſo you ſhall find in the 19th ver. *It pleaſed the Father, that in him all fulneſs ſhould dwell.* All fulneſs; all the treaſures of wiſdom are hid in him; he hath the whole world to diſpoſe of; therefore ſilver and gold are not to be compared unto him.

Yea,

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Yea, but yet there is one thing more; though he hath riches, yet he may prove a niggard, close-fisted, he may keep all to himself; the party that hath him may be poor enough, for want of contribution.

But, beloved, he is not more rich himself, than he is liberal to contribute of his treasure, to make those that are his, sharers to the uttermost of all that he hath. Therefore, in chap. ii. 10. (for he follows this subject all along) the apostle tells us, not only, as in verse 9, *That in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, but *You are complete in him who is the head of the body.* The head, you know, is not a niggard: what fulness the head hath, it communicates to every part: Christ is a head, and a head of fulness, the fulness of the Godhead. And as the head is not sparing, but dispenseth, and scattereth all that is in it, so that every member shall have a share; and not a share merely to keep life and soul together, as we say, but a share to make a man complete: so, if any persons in the world would devise what they could desire in such a one to match themselves unto, you shall find that a creature cannot frame those perfections, in its fancy, which it would enjoy; I say, men cannot frame any perfections, to come so near the real perfections of Christ, as a shadow comes near the substance. You have a proverb, that "Bachelors' wives, and maids' children, must be rare creatures;" that is, their fancy will devise what kind of one they will have, and what kinds of perfections they desire. Let the fancy devise

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deviſe what kind of perfection it can, to pleaſe ſenſe, Chriſt ſhall really out-ſtrip, in perfection, all theſe fancies, more than a ſubſtance doth out-ſtrip a ſhadow.

Now, the apoſtle having delivered himſelf thus fully by way of wooing unto Chriſt, he comes to cloſe in the words of the text; and ſo declares the end and purpoſe for which he ſets out Chriſt in ſo many excellencies as he did; the end of this was, *That in all things he might have the pre-eminence*; that he may be taken for the moſt excellent thing in the world; that all things may be rejected, rather than he; and he ſet above every thing in the world. So then, the point in brief is this, *In regard of the rare excellencies, and perfections, and uſefulneſs of Chriſt, which are incomparable, he ought to have the pre-eminence in all things.* In handling of which, we ſhall conſider,

Firſt, *What the pre-eminence is, which Chriſt ought to have.*

Secondly, *Why he ſhould have the pre-eminence in all theſe.* And then, a word or two of application.

Firſt, *What is this pre-eminence that Chriſt ſhould have.* I will not inſiſt upon the word pre-eminence: you all know, to give a perſon or thing the pre-eminence, is no more than this, to ſet up ſuch a perſon or thing above all others, and eſpecially for thoſe uſes and purpoſes we have occaſion of them for: I ſay, to chooſe ſuch a perſon before any other, as a perſon who can better, and more certainly bring to paſs what we deſire, than any elſe

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else can. So that in brief, to give Christ the pre-eminence, is, to set up Christ above all things in the world; to choose Christ, rather than any thing, for every use and purpose to make of him: I say, above and before any thing whatsoever, as apprehending him infinitely more able and sufficient unto such purposes, than any thing else is.

But more particularly, that we might the better see what the pre-eminence is, that Christ ought to have; you must know, that there is an infallible pattern drawn out unto us, according unto which we are to write our copy. In general, therefore, the pre-eminence we are to give unto Christ, is, the pre-eminence that the Father hath given unto him before us, and revealed unto us, that we may, in our way, give the same to him: therefore, we must consider a while what pre-eminence the Father gives unto Christ. You shall find, that the Father in many things infinitely sets up Christ above all things in the world: he chose Christ before all things in the world. For instance: *first*, the Father gives Christ the pre-eminence of his affections, his love and his delight. There is nothing in the world, the Father loves and delights in, as he doth in his Son. All the delight the creatures have from the Father, are but beams from the sun of righteousness, in the eyes of God. That Christ hath more abundance of the Father's love, than any creature in the world hath, I will give you but one passage or two, for the clearing of it. Look into *Prov.* viii. 30, 31. By the way, you must note, *first*, that wisdom, spoken

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ſpoken of in this chapter, is generally underſtood by all, to be Chriſt alone; and that which is indeed affirmed of wiſdom, can be affirmed of none but Chriſt. Among other particulars, note theſe two, to manifeſt it is Chriſt, and that he hath that choice affection of the Father: *I was ſet up,* (ſaith *Wiſdom* here) *from everlaſting.* I was ſet up from everlaſting: none was everlaſting but the Father to ſet him up; none could be everlaſting but the Son to be ſet up. All creatures had their beginning and being in time. Now, obſerve the affection of the Father in this; I was ſet up from everlaſting; it doth properly ſet forth the nature of pre-eminence. Wiſdom ſpeaks of many things; God did lay the foundations of the earth, made the ſea, and ſeveral creatures; but I was ſet up from everlaſting; as much as if he ſhould ſay, theſe have their place in the world, but my place is above them, in the affection of God. And, that this ſetting up is meant of God's affection to Chriſt above any creature in the world, mark what he ſpeaks in verſe 30, *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, in the habitable parts of the earth; I was by him as one brought up with him;* the meaning is, Chriſt is here conſidered as the darling of the Father. All the creatures in the world are brought up by God, in a large ſenſe; but he was brought up with him, that is to ſay, he was the very fondling of him. When *Abraham* had an *Iſaac*, *Iſaac* muſt be brought up with *Abraham*, and *Iſhmael* muſt be ſent abroad; *Iſhmael* ſhall have a portion, but

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but shall not be brought up with him. This shews the difference of affection to one before the other. Bringing up with him is an argument of affection; *I was brought up with him, I was daily his delight:* He made the creatures, but Christ was his only delight; that is, he could not look upon any creature in the world, and delight in it, but this delight he had in his Son, did swallow up the delight he had in any creature. In brief, the love and delight of the Father hath such a pre-eminence in the Son, that the truth is, there is no creature in the world doth actually participate of one jot of the love of the Father, but by the Son, and for the Son's sake; as the Son becomes the channel, or rather the spring, that receives from the ocean of God's love. That love the creature participates of, it participates of it by Christ; you know, when we partake of sweet streams that run in rivers and channels, we are beholden to the spring for the stream; and what the spring receives, that it conveys to the channel, from the ocean. The heart of God, as I may so speak, is the ocean, the first * rise of all love to the creature; Christ is the spring that first receives from him, and then through him is all love diffused to the creature.

You know, that by nature we are children of wrath, subjects of the hatred and displeasure of God, being at enmity with God; how do we partake of God again? *God is in Christ,* saith the text, *reconciling the world unto himself:* so that

[* 1 John iv. 19.]

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this uniting again to the Father, in the participating of the love of the Father, comes again in Christ; *You that sometimes were afar off, hath he made nigh by the blood of Christ:* afar off, in respect of the affection of God, in regard of our sinful nature; but made nigh, that is, reduced again into the affection of God by the blood of Christ.* Here is the pre-eminence of Christ above the creature, he hath infinitely more of affection; he is the spring and fountain of that affection that the creature partakes of. Now, then, we are to give this pre-eminence unto Christ, that reveals this unto us, that so we may see the pattern according to which we are to walk, and do likewise. We should so make Christ the choicest in our affection; we can never place love and affection more orderly, than by placing affection according to the pattern God sets; so far as we affect according to God, and imitate him in affecting, so far are our affections placed aright: to put the cart before the horse; to affect things of lower degree, above things that are higher; to give pre-eminence to things that should come behind, and to bring that behind that should have pre-eminence, is the disorder of man's affection; it swerves from the pattern and example of God himself. So then, Christ hath the pre-eminence over all persons with us, when he is really pro-

* This must be understood, as the Doctor explains it, of the open participation and enjoyment of the love of God, and not of the secret love of God, and the cause and origin of it, which is his own sovereign will, and not the blood of Christ.

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moted and exalted above all creatures in the world in our affection: *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* saith *Asaph; I desire nothing in the earth in comparison of thee.* Here is the pre-eminence of affection given unto Christ, when there is nothing in the world in the affection comparable unto him. You shall see the like in the *Canticles*, v. 9, 10. the church discoursing about her beloved, the strangers ask her, *What is thy beloved, more than another beloved?* she answers, *My beloved is the chief of ten thousands.* Here is the pre-eminence ascribed. When the people of *Israel* heard *David* say, he would go to war, they fell upon him with *Thou art more worth than ten thousand of us.* Here was the pre-eminence given to the king. So, I say, when in affection Christ is promoted as the chief among ten thousands; nay, let all things in the world be set with Christ, they are trash to him; then, I say, is given a real pre-eminence unto Christ, when, in affection, in regard of the excellencies of Christ, he is set above every thing in the world.

Secondly, The Father gives Christ this pre-eminence besides; namely, in a far more enlarged and multiplied proportion of gifts and parts above all creatures. Christ is the *Benjamin* of his Father, whose mess is more than five times as much as all the rest of the brethren. The apostle, *Phil.* ii. 9. tells us, *That God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name;* and in *Heb.* i. 9. he hath anointed his Christ, *He hath anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows.*

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lows. You ſhall find, that God promotes Chriſt even above angels; *Heb.* i. and ii. inſiſts mainly upon this point, in how many reſpects God exalts Chriſt above angels; *To which of his angels ſaid he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* But, I ſay, principally in reſpect of parts and gifts, you ſhall find that that which God beſtows upon Chriſt, is far more than he beſtows upon any creature. In *John* iii. 34. it is ſaid, *God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him;* we receive drop by drop of that we have; we have it but ſcanty, to that which Chriſt hath; he hath received the Spirit not by meaſure. The truth is, Chriſt receives a proportionable gift as head; now a head not only requires to have what ſhould ſupply itſelf of ſpirit, but ſuch a proportion as is ſufficient to ſupply all the parts, from the head to the foot; therefore, it muſt needs have more than the ſeveral parts themſelves; we need no more than for our own ſuſtenance. Chriſt is our head, and therefore as a head muſt have the pre-eminence; that is, a larger proportion of gifts than others; for others are but to find for themſelves, but he is to maintain himſelf, and to maintain the whole body too. Thus ſhould we give Chriſt the pre-eminence, to which the Father hath exalted him above creatures, giving unto him more than unto creatures; nay, giving unto creatures all they have by him; I ſay, ſo ſhould we give him the pre-eminence likewiſe. Whither ſhould a creature go for water, but unto the ſpring? whither ſhould the creature

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go for strength, but unto the fountain of strength? Is it not a derogation unto Christ, that all fulness should be in him alone, and we forsake this fountain of fulness to go unto broken cisterns that will hold no water? Mark it well, as often as ever you run to any creature in any necessity or exigence, either before you go to Christ, or instead of going to Christ; so often you rob Christ of that pre-eminence that God hath given unto him, and you should give unto him. If any creature in the world seem in your fancy to have a helpfulness, a likelihood of strength, and of supply; and this likelihood of supply seems more likely than one from Jesus Christ; so far is the pre-eminence of Christ brought down, and the creature hath gotten a pre-eminence above him. Look to it, beloved, while you run to the creature, to the world, for this, and that, and the other thing, and think it must come this way, or it will never come, Christ is wholly neglected of you: and you that are of a more spiritual strain, that when you are under any trial, run to any grace, or temper of spirit in you, or any qualifications, or any performances you can tender; and look after them, as the thing that most likely will furnish you with what you want, while you look faintly and coldly upon Christ, and the freeness of that grace that Christ brings along with himself; so long you deny unto Christ the pre-eminence of those parts and gifts God hath given unto him above other things. If God hath given unto any creatures more than unto Christ, you might rather have

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have ſought unto them than unto Chriſt; you might more properly look and wiſh for ſupply in them than in Chriſt; but if Chriſt hath more than any creature in the world; nay, if Chriſt be made the ſole and only fountain of ſupply, whether for the ſpirits, or the outward man; then muſt he have this pre-eminence to be ſought unto rather than any thing in the world, for the furniſhing of you, and ſupplying you with that, that muſt come from this fountain.

Thirdly, The Father gives Chriſt this pre-eminence to be the foundation to bear up all things: the apoſtle tells us, *Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. iii. 11. and in *Heb.* i. 2. ſpeaking of Chriſt, *As the brightneſs of the Father;* he ſaith alſo, *That he doth uphold all things by the word of his power:* God then gives to Chriſt this pre-eminence to be the foundation. The creature therefore robs Chriſt of his pre-eminence, when Chriſt muſt not be the foundation to bear up all things, but other foundations ſhall be laid; as if there were a firmer or ſecurer bottom to bear up, than Chriſt himſelf. In *Iſa.* xxviii. 16. you ſhall ſee what pre-eminence the Father gives unto Chriſt as the foundation; *Behold*, ſaith he, *I lay in* Sion *for a foundation, a ſtone, a tried ſtone, a precious corner-ſtone, a ſure foundation:* St. *Peter* hath an addition hereunto, in *Peter* ii. 4, 5, *An elect, precious ſtone, a living ſtone, unto whom coming, ye as lively ſtones are built up a ſpiritual houſe.* Mark what pre-eminenee he hath given to Chriſt,

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to be such a kind of foundation to uphold all things.

To give a touch of these things: *first*, he is a stone, the firmest bottom in the world, for the security of that which is laid upon it from sinking: give Christ this pre-eminence too. Beloved, look unto him, and consider him as a stone, an immoveable rock; such a rock as you may sit down with this confidence, that though heaven and earth shake and come together, whatsoever is laid upon him shall never totter.

He is a *tried stone*, saith the text, that is more than barely a stone. You know what pre-eminence those medicines have, that have *probatum est* over-written; that is an approved medicine, and, upon trial, found to be good. You know what pre-eminence that armour of proof hath, when a musket is discharged upon it, and the bullet pierceth it not; this is of pre-eminence above others: Christ is *a tried stone*, there is a *probatum est* written over the head of this stone; he was tried by the Father, he is tried by believers, he is tried by his enemies; and a *probatum est* is written over his head, that he is a stone with a witness:* tried by the Father, first, in his secret council; he found that nothing in the world could stand under that business which was to be done; he was tried by him on earth, *he made the iniquities of us all to meet on him*, Isa. liii. 6. and yet they could not make his back to break; here he was tried, he made him a butt for all his wrath, the whole

[* Heb. x. 14. Zech. iv. 7.]

quiver

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quiver of his envenomed arrows; yet he ſtood to it: he was tried by believers; they have put him to it to the utmoſt: he is tried by his very enemies, who find him a grindſtone to grind them to powder; and a bulwark of ſecurity for all ſuch whom they oppoſe.

He is not only a tried ſtone, but *a precious tried ſtone*, ſaith the apoſtle, that is more; he gives him this pre-eminence, to be a precious ſtone. You know, when the Holy Ghoſt ſets forth the glory of the church in the *Revelations*, under the name and title of ſuch and ſuch precious ſtones, of which the foundation, the gates, and the walls were made, it is ſet forth in way of excellency, that they are precious ſtones; here, I ſay, is pre-eminence, that Chriſt is a precious ſtone, as well as a tried ſtone; precious to God, nothing ſo delectable as what he doth; precious to believers, precious in reſpect of his beauty; (no beauty like his) precious in reſpect of his value; nothing of worth comparable to him; *The fruit of the body for the ſin of the ſoul, thouſands of rams, and ten thouſand rivers of oil*, come not near in value to the ranſom of the ſoul; but Chriſt hath ranſomed it, and is raiſed from the grave. All the creatures in the world, gathered up together, could never make up a ſum to buy out the ſoul: therefore he is precious, precious in value and worth: all receipts in the world ſpend out their virtue, and are dry things, to the virtue and excellency of Chriſt: ſuch is the virtue that is found in Chriſt, that let him but come and lay his mouth to the foot, where the thorn

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thorn is, he draws out the thorn; nay, he lays his mouth to the plague-sore* of the soul, and he sucks out the venom; it is true, he drinks his own bane; for the present, it costs him his life; but he sucks out the poison† from the person that makes use of him. There are many precious stones, they say, that are of admirable virtue, but yet none is compared unto Christ. He is *a sure foundation*, saith the prophet, that is more; not only precious, but sure; so sure, that lay what load you can lay upon the back of Christ, he stoops not; and, therefore, he was excellently typified by those brazen pillars in *Solomon*'s temple; they were made of brass, on purpose to shew their strength, whereon the whole weight of the porch of the temple lay. Christ hath this pre-eminence given unto him of the Father, that although an infinite weight were to be imposed upon him, yet he should go away with all. And in this regard, *Sampson* was a type of him, who, being barred up in the city among the *Philistines*, takes the gates of the city, and carries them up into a mountain, and there lays them: he is so *sure a foundation*, that lay the load of all the sins you ever committed; lay the load of all the sins of all the people that shall be saved by him, yet he stoops not; these break him not, he will carry them away as easily as *Sampson* the gates: add, to that, the load of all your duties and performances, and businesses in the world; lay all upon Christ, he will do all for you. But, must

[* Num. xxi. 8, 9. John iii. 14, 15.] [† 2 Cor. xv. 56.]

not

not we do them? (ye will ſay) Yea, he will do them for you, and in you: *firſt*, he will do them for you, namely, in fulfilling righteouſneſs in his own perſon, which he preſents to his Father, as that righteouſneſs whereby believers ſhall be juſtified before the Father. As he doth all *for* them, ſo he doth all righteouſneſs *in* them. Your duties are as the duty you do to a deceaſed friend; you think it is the laſt duty, you ſhall do for him, to carry him to the grave; though, you may have bearers, you ſhall go under the corpſe, but the bearers ſhall have all the weight upon their ſhoulders, ſo that you go eaſy, in reſpect of the aſſiſtance of the bearers: all the duties we have to do, may ſeem weighty; this is a hard ſaying, and that is a hard ſaying, who can obey it? But, know, that the Lord Chriſt is ſuch a pillar, ſuch a bearer, to take all the weight of duties upon his back, that he carries the burthen; and ſo carries it, that you ſhall go but as the friend of the corpſe, the burthen ſhall be off from your ſhoulders. In all duties God calls for of any perſon, the ſtrength of Chriſt is made perfect in the weakneſs of him that is to do them. Chriſt takes not men ſimply from doing, but he takes away the heavineſs and the taſk. We look upon duties as a yoke and burthen; but mark what Chriſt ſaith, *Take my yoke, for it is eaſy; and my burthen, for it is light.* How can this be, that it ſhould be a yoke, and yet eaſy; a burthen, and yet light? It is a yoke and burthen in itſelf, to any perſon that carries all himſelf, without Chriſt; but eaſy and light when Chriſt

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Christ bears the weight of it. Again, add to this, He is so *sure a foundation*, that, besides duties, lay all your burthens upon him, his back is broad enough to sustain all; the burthen of your spirits, the burthen of your outward man, all the burthens of the church in general, while she is under the greatest calamities: Christ, I say, is *a sure foundation* to bear all these; to bear the burthen of all the cares of all the people of God; *Cast your care upon him, for he cares for you*, saith the apostle. Finally, he is *a sure foundation*; commit all your comforts unto Christ, he will uphold all your comforts, he will renew them and enlarge them.

Besides, he is an *elect stone*, singled out by God himself, for this very office, in respect of his excellency and usefulness, to have the pre-eminence. And as he is elected unto it; this imports, it is God's own act that Christ should have such a pre-eminence, to be the foundation. Besides, as it is the act of God, so there is a certainty that God himself must be drawn dry, before Christ shall, or be left any jot unable to do that which is imposed upon him: look, therefore, what God himself, in heaven, is able to do, as he is God: all this is Christ made able to do, by him that sends him about this employment: so that he must be spent, before Christ shall be dry. If a father hath a child, that he prizeth as his own life, a slave in the gallies, he will send the ransom of his son to the gallies; he will spend all that ever he hath, rather than his son shall not be redeemed. There is no wise man sends a servant about any employment

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in the world, but he furnishes him thoroughly to dispatch that business about which he sends him: it is a vain thing for a master to send a servant for five pounds worth of any thing, and not give him so much money. Doth God send Christ into the world to redeem sinners, to sustain the burthen of sins, and not furnish him to do the work he sends him about? He might as well have kept him at home, if he did not furnish him thoroughly, that he might dispatch it.

Finally, He hath such a pre-eminence, as to be a living-stone, and such a living-stone, as makes all stones living that come near him. Here is the pre-eminence Christ hath; of the loadstone you observe, all iron or steel that comes near it, it draws all to it, and communicates, of its own virtue, to the iron it draws: this is most like to Christ; Christ is such a loadstone, that he draws many after him; and, as he draws them after him, so he communicates his own virtue to them: so that now, as he is a living-stone, he communicates life to them, though they were dead in sin: and not only so, but he communicates a power to them, to make other things lively. You have an observation, when once a knife is touched with a loadstone, it will draw another: it is most certain Christ hath this virtue to draw souls to himself, and when he draws them, they partaking of life from him, he gives unto them to be instruments of life unto others: *When thou art converted,* (saith Christ to *Peter*) *strengthen thy brethren.* Now, seeing Christ hath all this pre-eminence given unto him

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him by the Father, to be such a foundation to bear up all things, let us give him this pre-eminence to lay all upon him, and not upon any thing else whatsoever: and so far as we do lay all upon *this stone, this tried stone, this precious corner stone, this sure foundation, this elect corner stone, this living-stone;* so far as we will venture all upon him, we so far give him the pre-eminence: but, if we will be setting buttresses to the house that is built upon a rock, what is this but a disparagement to the foundation? If the foundation be firm and good, wherefore then served buttresses? It is apparent the house will sink, when it cannot stand alone without them: so far as you set up any props unto Christ the foundation, that is to bear up all by himself, so far you disparage Christ; so far you bring him down, and give him not the pre-eminence. I see the time steals away. There are many particulars, wherein I should shew you how you may give the pre-eminence unto Christ. But I must hasten.

Consider, briefly, Why should Christ have the pre-eminence? Why should not other things sit cheek-by-jole with him?* I answer, Because it is the good will and pleasure of the Father he should have the pre-eminence. What is the reason *Joseph* must be the chief man in *Ægypt? Pharaoh* will have it so. What is the reason that *Mordecai* must be led through the city with pomp and triumph, and *Haman* lead the horse, when *Mordecai* was counted a slave to *Haman?* Why, king *Aha-*

* Side by side, or in equality with him.

suerus

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ſuerus will have it ſo. And, if God will have it ſo, it muſt be ſo: if there were no other reaſon, but God the Father's will, we, that are ſubjects, ſhould yield to the Father his own will, and give that honour to him, whom he will honour: *What ſhall be done to the man whom the king will honour? Thus ſhalt thou do to him, Let the royal apparel be brought which the king uſeth to wear, and the horſe that the king rideth upon, and the crown-royal which is ſet upon his head; and let this apparel, and horſe, be delivered to the hand of one of the king's moſt noble princes, that they may array the man withal, whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horſe-back through the city, and proclaim before him, Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom the king will honour,* Eſther vi. 8, 9. As much as to ſay, Thoſe the king honours, the people muſt honour with him: ſo, if God the Father will honour the Son with a pre-eminence upon earth, his will muſt be a law to us; we muſt honour him with that pre-eminence, becauſe he will have it ſo.

Secondly, Chriſt muſt have the pre-eminence above all other things in the world, as he is born unto it; he is heir of all things. You know, it is the right of the heir to have the inheritance, or, a double portion above his brethren; Chriſt therefore being the heir of the world, the firſt begotten of the Father; nay, the only Son; it ſtands with nature, he ſhould have the pre-eminence above a younger brother.

Thirdly, Chriſt hath bought this pre-eminence; he hath paid for it to the uttermoſt value of it. He

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He that buyeth a lordship, it is fit he should be lord of the manor; it is not fit any inferior tenant should be above him, as long as he hath purchased and given a price for it: Christ hath purchased this pre-eminence, and he payed the Father the uttermost farthing; *He beheld the travail of his soul, and was satisfied* with it; and therefore he ought to have it.

Fourthly, Christ ought to have the pre-eminence of all things, in that he alone is able to manage this pre-eminence. You know there are many favourites in states sometimes, that have the doing of all businesses of state, in respect of the favour of the prince; but the state comes to ruin, and they also, if they be not able to manage the state. If any creature in the world should have the pre-eminence given to him to manage all affairs in the world, but Christ himself; certainly, it would prove to the world, as the poet feigned it did by the son of *Phœbus*, that went about to drive the chariot of the sun: *Phœbus* could manage the same in order; but *Phaeton*, a novice, a stripling, an ignorant fellow, comes in; he steps up to rule the sun, and the whole world is set on fire: I say, it would be so at least with the world, if any creature should have the pre-eminence to manage the affairs of it. Look to the wisest man in the world, and most able to manage the affairs of the world; yet he hath so many irons in the fire, some of them burn for want of looking to: therefore Christ should have the pre-eminence, because he can

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can go through ſtitch with whatever buſineſs he undertakes.

Fifthly, Chriſt ſhould have the pre-eminence in all things, becauſe he hath beſt deſerved it at our hands: we uſually honour thoſe people to whom we are moſt bound; according to the kindneſs received, ſo is our exalting of the perſon. Now, what creature in the world comes near to Chriſt in loving kindneſs and deſert at our hands? Where had we been, had not Chriſt ſtept in between us and the Father to make peace with the Father for us? Oh! what a fearful account ſhould we have come unto at the great tribunal of the Lord, had not Chriſt before-hand cancelled all that God could charge us withal, and blotted out our tranſgreſſions, and preſented us without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing in the ſight of God; *In him you live, move, and have your being;* by him you have acceſs to the throne of grace, through a new and living way; all you have, and all that you are, all that you hope for hereafter, come only from this fountain, this Chriſt, who hath purchaſed all of the Father for you. If any creature in the world can do theſe things for you, let the creature be exalted above him; but if he leave all the creatures of the world behind, and out-ſtrip them; good reaſon there is, according to his deſert, he ſhould have the pre-eminence. The apoſtle, conſidering the infinite deſert of Chriſt to be exalted by men, breaks out into this vehement expreſſion, *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be accurſed with a great curſe,* 1 Cor.

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1 Cor. xvi. 22. so deserves* this Christ at the hands of man.

Now for application of it: is it Christ's due to have the pre-eminence? then bring down every thing that exalts itself above Christ; rear and set up the thrown-down and dejected Christ in you; you that have exalted the world, and made it your god, bring down this idol, grind it to the dust, set up the Lord Christ; if you will have any thing in the world, let Christ bear of it. When men would have any thing of a king, they never go to the scullion in the kitchen; but to the favourite, by whom the king hath declared he will deliver things. When the people came to *Pharaoh*, he sends them to *Joseph*, as *Joseph* said, he would do; so, I say to you, would you have any thing of God, go to Christ, go by Christ to him. If you come in any other name in the world, if God answers you in that you would have, he answers you with a curse; *This is my beloved Son, hear him;* as he will direct you, so you shall speed: if Christ say, your sins are forgiven, they shall be forgiven; if Christ will make a deed of gift to you, of liberty from bondage, of grace, or of glory; if Christ hath once past the deed, the Father will under-write to it and subscribe it; *If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed:* for *of his fulness we do receive grace, for grace.* In *John* xvii. 2. it is said, *The Father hath given to him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life:* As you will have these things, go to Christ; if

[* John xxi. 17.]

you

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you go any where elſe in the world, but to Chriſt, you ſhall go without; they are to be had no where elſe. God hath given him the pre-eminence; he muſt rule all, he muſt determine, and the Father will yield; *The Father hath given all judgment to the Son, and he himſelf will judge no man. The government is laid upon his ſhoulders:* therefore you muſt go where God ſends you, if you will ſpeed for any thing of him.

Learn of Chriſt more, let Chriſt be the *Alpha and Omega;* in all things, begin in Chriſt, end in Chriſt; do all by Chriſt, get all by Chriſt.

But muſt not we ſerve in duty, will you ſay?

I anſwer, Ye muſt ſerve in duty and obedience, but look not that that duty ſhould bring any thing; it is Chriſt brings every thing you get; you get nothing by duties: aſſure yourſelves, while you look to get by that you do, you will but get a knock, becauſe of ſo much ſinfulneſs in the duty; but if you will have any good, you muſt get it by Chriſt: your duties you perform, are that wherein you are to walk in the world, and before the world, that you may be profitable to men; but as for getting any thing, aſſure yourſelves, while you labour to get by duties, you provoke God, as much as lies in you, to puniſh you for ſuch preſumption, if not for the filthineſs of the things you perform.

And as you muſt bring every thing down that exalts itſelf above Chriſt; ſo you muſt ſet Chriſt above every thing; know, this will be *the great condemnation, that light,* that is Chriſt, *is come*

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into the world, and men love darkneſs rather than light: they love to run to other things, and to forſake the light; this will be the condemnation. So far as Chriſt is ſlighted, and other things promoted above him, ſo far you take away the great end for which Chriſt was ſent into the world, which was, *That he might have the pre-eminence in all things.*

SERMON VI.

The New Covenant of Free Grace.

ISAIAH xlii. 6, 7.

And I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſit in darkneſs out of the priſon-houſe.

THE Lord is pleaſed by this ſweet evangeliſt of the *Jews*, this evangelical prophet *Iſaiah*, to pour forth his own gracious thoughts and purpoſes concerning his dear Son Chriſt; in this chapter eſpecially, he reveals and declares himſelf from the beginning of it.

It

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It is worth the while to mark the coherence, to ſee how theſe words come in.

Firſt, He declares who it is that he ſends into the world for ſuch a buſineſs, by two titles, in verſe 1. *firſt*, he calls him a ſervant, that is, in reſpect of the employment and buſineſs he hath to do, wherein he is to ſerve the Lord: and in reference to this buſineſs, he tells us what he doth, that this his ſervant may diſpatch it effectually, *Behold my ſervant*, ſaith he, *whom I uphold. Secondly*, he calls him his elect, and that in reference to the deſignation or ſeparation of him, the ſingling him out unto this buſineſs. And he doth further amplify the deſcription of him, by the tenderneſs of this elect unto him, *My elect*, ſaith he, *in whom my ſoul delighteth:* here is the deſcription of the perſon; Chriſt is this perſon, as you ſhall hear by and by, whom he thus deſcribes.

In the next place the Lord propounds the great end for which he doth elect this his ſervant, and uphold him, and furniſh him with his Spirit: For he ſaith alſo, *I have put my Spirit upon him;* and the end of it is, *That he may bring judgment to the Gentiles:* here you ſee who he is; how he is furniſhed; and to what end he is furniſhed: *A ſervant upheld, the Spirit put upon him*, to the end, *that he might bring judgment to the Gentiles.*

The Lord proceeds further, and ſhews how this ſervant of his ſhall deport and demean himſelf; after what manner he ſhall carry this buſineſs in the world, *To bring judgment to the Gentiles.* He

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deſcribes this in two circumſtances. *Firſt*, Chriſt ſhall diſpatch this buſineſs of the Father, not in a ruffling or ſtirring way: he ſhall not make a great noiſe, as men uſe to do, ſounding trumpets before them, when they do any good; but as you have it in the 2nd verſe, *He ſhall not cry, nor lift up, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreets:* he ſhall go privately about his buſineſs. And, *ſecondly*, he doth illuſtrate the manner of managing and ordering this buſineſs, by the tenderneſs of the Spirit of this Chriſt towards thoſe people with whom he ſhall deal; he doth, I ſay, illuſtrate this tenderneſs of his Spirit admirably, in the 3d verſe, *A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and the ſmoaking flax ſhall he not quench:* he ſhall not deal roughly or harſhly, but gently and mildly; and yet as little noiſe as he ſhall make, though he ſhall not ſeem to promiſe any great thing by his privacy of deportment and carriage; yet, for all that, in the 4th verſe, the Lord, by his prophet, tells us, that he ſhall be never the further off from performing the buſineſs he takes in hand: *He ſhall not fail, nor be diſcouraged, till he hath ſet judgment in the earth.*

And then, in the 5th verſe, the Lord is pleaſed to confirm this, by undeniable arguments, that there ſhall not be a failing in Chriſt to compaſs this great buſineſs; the arguments, I ſay, are ſtrong: *Thus ſaith the Lord, he that created the heavens, and ſtretched them out: he that ſpread forth the earth, and that that cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and ſpirit*

to

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to them that walk therein: he is not a mean perſon that undertakes this thing, but the mighty Lord; he that hath done all great things in the world, that have been done heretofore, it is he that undertakes it; and therefore, there is no fear that it ſhould fail.

Having thus diſcourſed in general, concerning the buſineſs of Chriſt in the world, and the manner of managing it; he comes again with the ſame thing, and deſcends unto particular inſtances and illuſtrations of what he delivered before, but generally: therefore, *firſt*, In the beginning of the 6th verſe, the Lord is pleaſed to ſhew forth the authority and commiſſion by which Chriſt is authorized unto this great buſineſs; *I the Lord* (ſaith the text) *have called thee in righteouſneſs:* this call is the commiſſion of Chriſt: *No man takes this honour unto him, but he that is called of God,* (ſaith the apoſtle) *as* Aaron *was.* That gives authority to a buſineſs, to be called of God. *Secondly*, He reiterateth the helpfulneſs of God, as well as his call unto it, in the following words, *I will hold thy hand, and keep thee.* And ſo, *thirdly*, he falls in with an explication or interpretation. *Firſt*, How Chriſt ſhall compaſs this great buſineſs which he calls him out unto; he ſhall do it thus, by the Father's *giving of him to be a covenant for people. Secondly*, What Chriſt is to do, or the end for which he is called out to be a covenant. Before it was ſaid, *To bring judgment to the Gentiles;* that was his buſineſs in the end of the 1ſt verſe; now he

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he expounds what this judgment is, *It is to open the blind eyes, to bring the prisoners out of prison*, &c.

There are two main things in the text. The *first*, is, The way by which Christ compasses the great business of the Father upon earth, and that is, by being *given to be a covenant to the people*. *Secondly*, The business itself, whereunto he is called out, that is, *To open the blind eyes, to bring the prisoners out of prison*. So you see how sweetly these truths hang together.

For the words themselves, there are these particulars considerable in them. *First*, Who it is that speaks this gracious language in the text; you shall find, in the beginning of the verse, it is the Lord: *Thus saith the Lord, I will call thee, and give thee for a covenant*.

Secondly, We may consider the person to whom this gracious language is directed and spoken; and that is unto Christ; expressed only in this place by the name of *thee; and give thee for a covenant*. Mark here I pray you, it is not, I will give myself; it should be so, if the Father had spoken to, or of himself only: but it is plain here are two several persons mentioned, *I*, and *thee*; if there be two several persons, then it cannot be God speaking to himself; it must be the Father speaking to the Son, to Christ.

Yea, but you will say, It is somebody else that speaks, and is spoken unto.

Nay, but mark in *Isa.* xlix. where the same expressions are used, that are in the text; and then you shall plainly see, it is the speech of the Father

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ther unto Chriſt, by many circumſtances that will illuſtrate it. In the 5th verſe he begins thus: *And now, ſaith the Lord, that formed me from the womb, to be his ſervant, to bring* Jacob *again to him;* it is none but Chriſt that brings *Jacob* back: *And you that were ſometimes afar off, hath he made nigh by the blood of Chriſt.* And in the 6th verſe, he ſaith, *Is it a light thing that thou ſhouldeſt be my ſervant to raiſe up the tribes of* Jacob, *and to reſtore the preſerved of* Iſrael? Who is it that raiſeth the tribes of *Jacob*, and reſtores the preſerved of *Iſrael?* None but Chriſt, who is the Saviour of all that are ſaved. Here he begins to fall upon ſome of the words in the text itſelf. *I will alſo give thee for a light unto the Gentiles, that thou mayeſt be my ſalvation unto the end of the earth.* Here it is plain now that it is only Chriſt; for none is the ſalvation of men unto the end of the earth, but Chriſt alone. Again, look in the 8th verſe and you may ſee more of the words of the text: *Thus ſaith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of ſalvation have I helped thee, and I will preſerve thee, and give thee for a covenant to the people.* Here you ſee likewiſe, that he who is the Saviour of *Iſrael*, is he who is given for a covenant to the people. And in the 9th verſe, *That thou mayeſt ſay to the priſoners, go forth; and to them that are in darkneſs, ſhew yourſelves:* ſo here is the ſame thing delivered more plainly, and Chriſt more fully expreſſed. This I have opened more at large, becauſe all I ſhall ſpeak will depend upon the opening of this truth.

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, In the next place, we are to note, what he ſpeaks unto Chriſt here, even gracious language in reſpect of us. *He will give him for a covenant.*

Fourthly, Note here unto whom the Father gives Chriſt for a covenant; the text ſaith, *Unto the people, and unto the Gentiles;* that is, to *Jews* and to Gentiles, to all ſorts of people.

Fifthly, Note the end and purpoſe for which the Father gives him to be a covenant unto the people; *To open the blind eyes, to bring the priſoners out of priſon.*

So, you have the parts of the text, which afford many excellent truths, and we might ſingle them ſeverally out. But for the ſake of brevity, I will reduce the whole ſubſtance of this text into one propoſition.

Doct. *The Father is pleaſed to give Chriſt for a covenant to the people and Gentiles, to open their blind eyes, and to bring them as priſoners out of priſon.*

This doctrine, you ſee, is directly the words of the text, adding only that explication, that it is the Father that doth give Chriſt. There is abundance of marrow and fatneſs in this preſent truth I have delivered unto you, more than people uſually can find out in it. We will endeavour therefore to break the bone, that all the marrow may be ſeen, and none of it may be loſt. For this purpoſe, we muſt deſire you to obſerve theſe following particulars.

I. What

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I. What it is for Chriſt to be a *covenant*, or, *the covenant.*

II. What it is for Chriſt to be given to be a covenant.

III. What it is for Chriſt to be a covenant *to open the blind eyes.*

IV. If time will permit, we will then conſider to whom this Chriſt is given to be a covenant; who they are that may partake of him, given to be a covenant unto them.

I will begin with the firſt of theſe, what it is for Chriſt to be a covenant; and herein will conſider two things.

Firſt, What this covenant is, that Chriſt is unto us. *Secondly*, How Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be this covenant.

Firſt, What this covenant is, which Chriſt is unto perſons. *Firſt*, A word or two in general concerning the nature of a covenant. The common and uſual manner of covenants, as you all know, is this; namely, a mutual agreement between parties upon certain articles, or propoſitions, propounded on both ſides; ſo that each party is bound and tied to fulfil his own conditions, which if either of them fail in, the other is thereby freed from his part, and the covenant becomes nullified, void, and fruſtrated. You all know, this is the true nature of a common covenant.

There are two ſorts of covenants generally, wherein God enters with men. There are divers particular covenants, but I will omit to ſpeak of them; ſuch as the covenant with *David* to eſtabliſh

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bliſh his throne to himſelf, and to his poſterity; this the prophet *Jeremy* ſpeaks of at large, which I ſhall only touch upon and mention, the rather, becauſe ſome are conceited there was no other covenant made with *David*, but the covenant of grace: *Jer.* xxxiii. 20, *Thus, ſaith the Lord, if you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, that there ſhould not be day nor night in their ſeaſon; then alſo may my covenant be broken with* David *my ſervant, that he ſhould not have a ſon to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites, the prieſts, my miniſters.* This covenant is for the eſtabliſhment of his throne, and this is a different covenant from the covenant of grace; that is common to all ſorts of believers, one with another: but I omit that.

There are two main general covenants God enters into with men; the one is called the firſt covenant, the old covenant, the covenant of works; it ſtood upon theſe terms, *Do this, and live.* The other is called a new covenant, by the prophet *Jeremiah;* and, by the apoſtle, in *Heb.* viii. it is called a better covenant, a covenant of grace. As for the firſt, the old covenant, the covenant of works, which ſtood upon theſe terms, *Do this, and live;* it is very probable, if not certain, that Chriſt was this firſt covenant unto men, even the covenant of works; for, however it be not a covenant of grace, as the ſecond and new covenant is, yet it may, in ſome ſenſe, be called a covenant of grace, in reference unto other creatures; for all creatures are under this tie, to do this; that is, what

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what their part is which God hath impoſed upon them; yet no creature hath this privilege of grace, that in doing this, he ſhould live: the ſun doth his part, he runs his race; yet the ſun lives not in, or upon the performance hereof: brute creatures do their part; that is, the trade they were ſet about; yet they die and periſh, and are no more, when they have done: *What then is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him?* Pſalm viii. 4. that he ſhould have life, and no other creature in the world, ſeeing there can be no difference in the creatures of themſelves; the difference muſt be in the grace of God, which makes it that ſome creatures ſhould live by doing, and others not. In *Prov.* viii. 31. you ſhall ſee the ground of this covenant; when the Lord made all things in the world, Wiſdom, which is Chriſt, there tells us, *That ſhe was the delight of the Father, and her whole delight was with the ſons of men:* I ſay, the foundation upon which the difference was built, between man and other creatures, that he hath this covenant by grace, and others not, is this, *All the delight of Chriſt was with the ſons of men:* he himſelf ſingled out the ſons of men to be his delight, as he was the delight of the Father; and for his ſake the Father will do more for them, than for other creatures.

But, now, the covenant which the Lord mentions in this place, by the prophet, is not the firſt, but the ſecond covenant; *I will give thee for a cove-*

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a covenant to the people: he means here, not the covenant of works, but the covenant of grace; which covenant is mentioned, *Jer.* xxxi. 33. and renewed again by the prophet *Ezekiel*, in chap. xxxvi. 26. And also *Heb.* viii. where you shall find both the covenant itself, and how, and in what sense, Christ is said to be that very covenant unto men. In verse 6, this is appropriated unto Christ, to be his great privilege, to have the sole hand and managing of this new covenant: *But now* (saith the apostle) *he hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant:* and what is this *better covenant?* Mark what follows in verse 8, *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of* Israel, *and with the house of* Judah; *not according to the covenant I made with their fathers:* for in verse 10, *This is the covenant, I will make with the house of* Israel *after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more:* here is the substance of the covenant, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

Now, all that I will note briefly out of all this, shall be only one proposition, wherein you shall see both a vast and comfortable difference between this

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this new covenant, and all other covenants that God made with men; it differs, I ſay, exceedingly, and the comfort lies in the difference, which is this.

All other covenants of God, beſides this, run upon a ſtipulation; and the promiſe runs altogether upon conditions on both ſides: the condition on God's part was, they ſhould live; the condition on man's part was, that he might live, he muſt do this: and mark, the conditions in that covenant were ſuch, that in caſe man did fail to perform his condition, the covenant was broke, and God was free from giving life; which accordingly came to paſs; for man failing in doing, the covenant was actually broken, diſannulled, and fruſtrated, and man lay under the curſe of the breach of the covenant in not doing. But in this covenant of grace, to wit, the new covenant, it is far otherwiſe; there is not any condition in this covenant: mark what I ſay, and I beſeech you hear me with an impartial and unprejudiced opinion. I know I ſhall go againſt the ſtrain of ſome: but, I hope, what I ſhall deliver, ſhall be firmly proved from ſcripture. I ſay, the new covenant is without any conditions whatſoever on man's part.* Man is tied to no condition that he muſt

* This, though abundantly confirmed by the following arguments is found fault with by ſome, particularly by D. W. in his *Goſpel-Truth*, &c. p. 59. and yet is no other than what ſome of the moſt judicious divines have aſſerted, particularly the famous *Witſius*: "We, ſays he in *Oeconom. Fœder.* lib. 3. "chap. 1. ſect. 8. agree with them, who think, accurately "ſpeaking,

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muſt perform, which if he does not perform, the covenant is made void by him.

The firſt argument is this, The covenant is called an *everlaſting covenant*; and here, in *Heb.* viii. God ſaith, *I will be merciful to your iniquities, and your ſins will I remember no more.* Now ſuppoſe there were conditions for man to perform, and ſuppoſe man did fail in thoſe conditions, what were become of the covenant? Man did fail in the condition, whilſt there were conditions before in the firſt covenant, and thereby the covenant was fruſtrated. Man is not now ſo confirmed, but if there were conditions for him to perform, which if he did not perform, the covenant ſhould be broken; I ſay, he is not ſo confirmed, but he might fail in thoſe conditions: nay, if thoſe be the conditions, that ſome men conceive, then he daily fails. And, if the covenant ſtands upon ſuch conditions, the covenant is fruſtrated, ſo ſoon as the conditions are broken. So, I ſay, if the covenant

" ſpeaking, that the covenant of grace has no conditions on " our part, properly ſo called." And elſewhere, he has theſe words: " This is owned, that this is the true and proper " condition of the covenant of grace, by which it is chiefly " diſtinguiſhed from the covenant of works, that all righte- " ouſneſs in which the right to life is only founded, is per- " formed by the mediator and ſurety of the covenant; hence " it follows, this righteouſneſs being admitted, that *no con-* " *dition, properly ſo called, can be required of the elect*, by which " they obtain for themſelves freedom from puniſhment, and " a right to life." *Animadv. Irenic.* chap. 14. ſect. 5. And indeed what ſome call conditions of the covenant, as faith, repentance, and obedience, are no other than parts or bleſſings of it, which are abſolutely promiſed in it. See *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. 27, or what the Doctor afterwards calls the fruits and effects of the covenant.

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ſtands upon any conditions to be performed on man's part, it cannot be an *everlaſting covenant*, except man was ſo confirmed in righteouſneſs, that he ſhould never fail in that which is his part.

But, you will ſay, There are many conditions mentioned in this covenant; it is ſaid, that there muſt be *a law put in the mind, and written in their heart*, with many other ſuch things.

I anſwer, beloved, It is true, God ſaith, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*, &c. But do you find in this, or in any other, mention of a covenant, that this is the condition to be performed on man's part; I ſay, that this is the condition of the covenant, and ſuch a condition, that if a man perform it not, the covenant is fruſtrated? There is no ſuch thing in the text.

But you will ſay, Conditions, or no conditions, a man muſt have his heart in this manner.

I anſwer, It is true, by way of conſequence, that after we are in covenant with God, he will beſtow theſe things upon us as fruits and effects of that covenant; but, it is not true, by way of antecedence, that God doth require theſe things at our hands, before we ſhall be partakers of the covenant.

Arg. 2. Obſerve, I pray, and you ſhall plainly perceive, that man hath no tie upon him to perform any thing whatſoever in the covenant, as a condition that muſt be obſerved on his part; let the covenant itſelf be judge in this caſe: it plainly ſhews where all the tie lies, and as plainly ſhews that

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that the whole performance of the covenant lies only upon God himself; and that there is not one bond, or obligation, upon man to the fulfilling of the covenant, or partaking of the benefits of it. Mark it in *Jeremiah*, in *Ezekiel*, or in *Heb.* viii. read those passages over, wherein the tenure of the covenant is contained, and you shall easily see where the tie is, as *Heb.* viii. 10, *This is the covenant I will make with the house of* Israel *after those days, I will put my law into their minds, and write it in their hearts:* he will put it in, and write it; *and he will be to them a God, and they shall be to him a people.* The word *shall*, here, is a word of over-ruling; it is a word of power, as if he had said, I will order it so: it follows, *And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me:* how, by their own study and industry? No; see *John* vi. 45. and you shall see that that condition, of knowing the Lord, is to be performed by the Lord; for it is there said, *They shall be all taught of God.* Observe, also, the larger expression of the covenant, in *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. and there also you shall plainly perceive, that still all the tie lies upon God himself, and nothing at all upon man: *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you: A new heart will I also give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will take the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh: And I will put my Spirit into you, and cause you to walk*

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walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my judgments and do them, and ſhall dwell in the land: and in verſe 29, *I will ſave you from all your uncleanneſs, and I will multiply the fruit of the earth, I will do it.* Where is there in all this, one word that God ſays to man, Thou muſt do this? If God had put man upon theſe things, then they were conditions indeed; but, when God takes all upon himſelf, where are the conditions then on man's part?

Give me leave, I will aſk you but this queſtion, Suppoſe there ſhould be a fault, I make but a ſuppoſition, of performing in this covenant, whoſe were the fault? Muſt not the fault or failing to perform the covenant be his, who is tied and bound to every thing in the covenant, and ſaith, he will do it? If there be a condition, and there ſhould be a failing in the condition, he that undertakes all things in the covenant muſt needs be in fault: but the truth is, theſe particulars mentioned are not the conditions of the covenant, but they are conſequents of the covenant; the main ſubſtance of the covenant is included in theſe words, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* But, *ſprinkling with clean water, taking away a ſtony heart, and giving a heart of fleſh;* all theſe are nothing but the fruits of the covenant, which is, that God is the God of ſuch a people, and the people are the people of ſuch a God. For by virtue of this union, or uniting himſelf to his people, God doth cleanſe and purge, he doth ſanctify and refine them. As he becomes the

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God of his people, ſo he purgeth * and cleanſeth them. He doth not firſt come to men, and ſay, make yourſelves clean; get you the law of God in your minds; get you the fear of God into your hearts; get you power to walk in my ſtatutes; and when you do this, then I will be your God: if it did run ſo, then here were conditions indeed; but, it runs not thus; all the tie lies upon God's part, to do † every thing that is mentioned in the covenant.

But you will object, and ſay, If all lies upon God's part, and man muſt do nothing, then all his life time he may do what he liſt.

I anſwer, You muſt make a difference between doing any thing in reference to the covenant, as the condition thereof, and doing ſomething in reference to ſervice and duty, to that God who freely enters into covenant with you. I ſay only, that in a way of condition of the covenant you muſt do nothing.

Arg. 3. Nay, the covenant in the actual ſubſtance of it, is made good to a perſon before he can do any thing. ‡ The main thing in the covenant is God's being the God of a people, and the model and draught of that, is God's love. The covenant is nothing but God's love to man; God's love to give himſelf to man; God's love to take

[* Acts xv. 9.] [† Pſalm lvii. 2.]

‡ Chriſt, who is the covenant itſelf, the ſum and ſubſtance of it, muſt be firſt given to a man, before he can do any thing good; for *without* him we *can do nothing*; and faith muſt be given, *without* which we cannot *pleaſe God*.

man

man to himſelf. Now this love of God is caſt upon man before he can do any thing: before the children had done good or evil, Jacob *have I loved, and* Eſau *have I hated.* Shall I need to tell you that the covenant is then fulfilled in the ſubſtance of it, when men are actually juſtified? When men are juſtified, God hath made good his covenant unto them; he is their God, and they are his people: now where are the conditions of this covenant? Take but notice what the apoſtle ſaith, and tell me what conditions you find in it? *Rom.* iv. 4, *Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But,* ſaith he, in verſe 5, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, &c.* There are two phraſes here, to ſhew, there can be no conditions to make up the covenant on man's part, firſt, *to him that worketh not*; if there muſt be no working to partake of juſtification, then there is no conditions unto it. And again, if we muſt *believe on him that juſtifies the ungodly*; then juſtification is paſt over to a perſon whilſt he is ungodly; now where is the condition of the covenant, while there remains nothing but ungodlineſs in men? But if theſe things muſt be fulfilled as conditions, namely, to change our hearts, and ſuch like; then we are not juſtified as ungodly, but as righteous; and ſo it directly contradicts that of the apoſtle. We muſt therefore conclude, that this covenant, which is then made good when a perſon is juſtified, is conferred and beſtowed on him, be-

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fore there can be any ſuch thing as a condition in him.

Yea, but you will ſay to me, peradventure though works be not the condition of the covenant; yet, we hope you will yield, faith is the condition of the covenant.

I anſwer, beloved, I beſeech you obſerve me warily in this; for I am now upon a nice point; and I ſhall deſire to go as evenly as the ſcripture will guide me in it. I muſt needs tell you directly, and according to the truth, that, faith is not the condition of the covenant.*

He that believes ſhall be ſaved, he that believes

* This alſo is condemned as an error, by D. W. *Goſpel-Truth*, &c. p. 57. but it is with great propriety and truth here aſſerted; for faith is the fruit of electing grace, the gift of God, the operation of his Spirit, and of which Chriſt is the author and finiſher; and is not of men, or in their power to produce in themſelves, or exerciſe; yea, it is a bleſſing of the covenant of grace, and not a condition of it; or is what men have in conſequence of their being in the covenant, and not as the condition of their entrance into it. And the ſame is acknowledged by many great divines, particularly that excellent writer, often quoted, profeſſor *Witſius*: "The covenant "of grace, ſays he, or the goſpel ſtrictly ſo called, which is "the formula of the covenant, ſeeing it conſiſts in mere "promiſes, properly preſcribes nothing as a duty; it requires "nothing, it commands nothing, no not indeed, believe, "truſt, hope in the Lord, and the like." *Oeconom. Fœder.* l. 3. c. 1. ſ. 18. And again, "Nor does that ſeem to be ac-"curately ſaid, that *faith is a condition* which the law re-"quires of us, that we may be accounted righteous and "guiltleſs with God. The condition of juſtification, properly "ſpeaking, is no other than perfect obedience; this the law "requires, nor does the goſpel ſubſtitute another, but teaches "that the law is ſatisfied by our ſurety Chriſt; moreover "it is the buſineſs of faith to accept of the ſatisfaction offered "to it, and, by accepting, to make it its own." *Ib.* c. 8. ſect. 52.

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not ſhall be damned. Is not faith here the condition of the covenant?

I anſwer, There is no perſon under heaven ſhall be ſaved till he have believed. This I grant; yet this will not make faith to be the condition of the covenant. For, firſt, conſider faith as an act, our act, and as we do it, ſo I ſay it is a work; our act of believing is a work. If therefore we perform the condition that is a work for the enjoyment of the covenant, then the covenant doth depend upon a work; but it doth not depend upon a work, for the text ſaith, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly,* &c.

You will ſay, In that text, believing is required to the juſtifying of the ungodly.

I anſwer, An ungodly perſon, after he is juſtified, believes: but you muſt underſtand it, it is not the faith of the man that ſimply and properly juſtifies, but it is that Chriſt in whom he believes; believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly; it is he that juſtifieth, that is Chriſt. It is not believing that juſtifies. Mark well that phraſe; him that juſtifieth. Juſtification is an act of Chriſt, it is not an act of faith.

But you will ſay, It is an act of Chriſt by faith.

I anſwer, Then Chriſt juſtifies not alone. Is faith Chriſt himſelf? If not, then Chriſt muſt have a partner to juſtify, or elſe faith doth not juſtify, but Chriſt alone doth it. Nay, I ſay more, Chriſt juſtifies a perſon before he believes; for,

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for, he that believes is juſtified before he believes; for I aſk you, whether in juſtification a man muſt believe a truth or a falſhood? You will ſay, he muſt believe a truth; then ſay I, it is a truth that he is juſtified before he believes it; he cannot believe that which is not, and if he be not juſtified, that he may believe it, he then believes that which is falſe. But he is firſt juſtified before he believes, then he believes that he is juſtified.*

But what then ſerves faith for?

I anſwer, It ſerves for the manifeſtation of that juſtification which Chriſt puts upon a perſon by himſelf alone; that you by believing on him, may have the declaration, and manifeſtation of your juſtification.† Mark what the apoſtle ſaith, whereby

* Juſtification before faith, though cavilled at by many, is certain; ſince God juſtifies the ungodly, and ſince faith is the fruit and effect of juſtification, and the act which is converſant about it, and the object muſt be before the act; and beſides juſtification took place at the reſurrection of Chriſt; yea, from all eternity, as ſoon as he became the ſurety of his people; and which has been embraced, affirmed, and defended by divines of the greateſt note for orthodoxy and piety, as *Twiſſe*, *Pemble*, *Parker*, *Goodwin*, *Ames*, *Witſius*, *Maccovius*, and others. See my *Doctrine of Juſtification*, p. 36, 37, 38.—42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47.—50.—54.

† And, indeed, for what elſe can it ſerve, ſince it is neither the cauſe, nor matter, nor condition of juſtification? at moſt it can only ſerve as the hand that receives the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for juſtification, and claims an intereſt in it, and takes the comfort of it: nor does the Doctor ſay, it ſerves *only* for a manifeſtation, but that it does ſerve ſuch an end; as it is certain it does, as has been owned by many judicious divines; and particularly the learned *Hoornbeeck* thinks, that the difference between Dr. *Criſp*, and others, may eaſily be made up, by diſtinguiſhing juſtification into active and paſſive; the former is the act of God juſtifying, the latter the termination and

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by you ſhall find the true uſe of faith, that is not the condition, without which we receive no benefit from Chriſt; but rather it is the manifeſtation of that which is already done, and received. *Heb.* xi. 1, the apoſtle ſaith, *Faith is the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen.* I pray you obſerve the apoſtle's expreſſion, there is abundance of light in it. Faith is the evidence of things, it is not the being of things; and it is the evidence of things not ſeen. A man is juſtified, and that by Chriſt alone, but it is not known to him, it is an unſeen thing. Well, how ſhall he ſee this, and know that it is ſo? The text ſaith, *Faith is an evidence;* faith gives evidence to this thing, faith makes it known; by faith we come to apprehend it; by faith we come to rejoice in it, as we apprehend it to be our own. It is true, indeed, Chriſt hath honoured faith admirably; but let us take heed we do not over-honour it, to give the peculiar reſerved prerogative of Chriſt himſelf

and application of it to the conſcience of believers; the one is done at Chriſt's ſatisfaction, the other when a perſon actually believes; "*this indeed is a manifeſtation of that.*" *Summa Controv.* l. 10. p. 705. And afterwards he ſays. "We do not reject the diſtinction between juſtification as made in Chriſt, and as manifeſted to the ſoul, though in the explication of it, we do not in all things agree." p. 720. And it is the former, and not the latter, that is properly juſtification, as *Maccovius* obſerves, "It is ſaid of God that he juſtifies, *Rom.* iv. 5. and of us that we are juſtified, ch. 5. not that there is therefore a twofold juſtification; for that which is paſſive is improperly called juſtification, and is only the ſenſe of active juſtification." *Vide* πρωτον ψευδος, *Arminian.* c. 10. p. 120. And what then is this paſſive juſtification, which is by faith, any more than a perception, evidence, and manifeſtation, of what is properly juſtification?

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unto it: if faith were a concurrent thing with Chriſt, and Chriſt did not juſtify a perſon alone, what would follow? Conſider, when a man is juſtified, he is juſtified from all unrighteouſneſs; and if his faith juſtifies him from all unrighteouſneſs, this thing will unavoidably follow; that that thing which is full of unrighteouſneſs will juſtify a man from unrighteouſneſs; as much as to ſay, a man is juſtified from ſin by ſin.

But you will ſay, Faith is not ſin.

I anſwer, No, faith itſelf is not ſin: but that faith acted by believers is full of ſin; and the fulneſs of ſin in it, makes faith in ſome ſenſe a ſinful faith: and if it be ſinful, how can that which is ſinful juſtify man from ſinfulneſs? What need Chriſt be without all ſin to juſtify a perſon, if any thing elſe could do it that hath ſinfulneſs in it? You muſt either ſay, there is no ſin in your faith, or elſe you muſt ſay, you are juſtified by that which hath ſin in it; yet, I ſay ſtill, as faith is an evidence, a manifeſtation, ſo it may be ſaid to be our juſtification; that we are, in regard of our own hearts, and our own ſpirits, juſtified by faith: but God-ward, as we ſtand actually before him, a diſcharged people from ſin, and ſo conſequently partakers of the covenant; as we ſtand thus, I ſay, it is not faith that juſtifies, neither wholly, nor in part; but Chriſt alone freely for his own ſake, conſidering a perſon as ungodly, ſo he juſtifies him.

Beloved, let me tell you, though faith itſelf cannot thus be called our righteouſneſs; yet in reſpect

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reſpect of the glory that God aſcribes to it, that it ſeals to men's ſouls the fulneſs of righteouſneſs, how can you conſider a perſon a believer, and withal ungodly? When men are believers, they ceaſe to be ungodly: but if they are not juſtified till they believe, Chriſt doth not juſtify the ungodly, but the godly; and then that truth which I have delivered, *Rom.* iv. 5. cannot hold current, *That we muſt believe on him that juſtifies the ungodly;* but rather, we muſt believe on him that juſtifies the righteous. But, as I ſaid, we do not believe that we may be juſtified; but we do believe, and truly believe, when we are, and becauſe we are juſtified. So that ſtill it ſtands firm, we are not juſtified, we are not in covenant, we partake not of the covenant, by any condition we perform, till which performance the covenant cannot be made good unto us; but we are in covenant, and Chriſt makes us to be in covenant, for his own ſake, without any condition in the creature, *Shewing mercy to whom he will ſhew mercy;* without any thing, I ſay, the creature is to do, to this end, to partake of the covenant.

In the next place conſider, how Chriſt himſelf can be ſaid to be the covenant. For the text tells us, that he doth not only give Chriſt that there may be a covenant with men; but, ſaith he, *I will give thee for a covenant:* he himſelf is made the covenant. I anſwer, Chriſt is the covenant three ways. *Firſt*, He is the covenant fundamentally. *Secondly*, He is the covenant materially. *Thirdly*, He is the covenant equivalently.

Firſt,

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First, Chriſt is the covenant fundamentally; that is, he is the original of the covenant, the beginning of the covenant. The covenant of grace takes its being from Chriſt. *Adam* was all mankind, as all mankind was in *Adam*, in the loins of *Adam*: ſo Chriſt is the covenant, and all the covenant is, as it were, in the loins of Chriſt, and ſprings out of him: he is the covenant-maker; he is the covenant-undertaker; he is the covenant-manager; he orders the covenant; he is the covenant-diſpatcher; he doth every thing in the covenant; he makes the articles; he draws God the Father, and man, to an agreement unto the articles; *Thy people ſhall be a willing people in the day of thy power*, Pſalm cx. 3. *And God is in Chriſt reconciling the world* unto himſelf*, 2 Cor. v. 19. Chriſt brings God down to the terms of the covenant, to yield to them. Chriſt brings man alſo to be willing to it. *Heb.* viii. 6, Chriſt is called *The Mediator of the covenant*. A mediator, what is that? A mediator of a covenant, is a perſon that hath the managing of it on both ſides. A covenant is no covenant till it be concluded, and done: there

* By whom are meant, not all the individuals of mankind, for theſe are not all in Chriſt, nor all reconciled to God, multitudes dying in enmity to him, nor all intereſted in the bleſſing of non-imputation of ſin: whereas each of theſe is ſaid of the world here: but the elect of God, who are choſen in Chriſt, whoſe peace Chriſt is, whoſe ſins are not imputed to them, and againſt whom no charge of any avail can be laid; and particularly the people of God among the Gentiles are here deſigned, who are frequently called the world in ſcripture; being the world which God loved, for whoſe ſins Chriſt is the propitiation, and of the reconciling of which mention is particularly made, *John* iii. 16. 1 *John* ii. 2. *Rom.* xi. 12. 15.

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may be articles, but it is not actually a covenant till both ſides are agreed: ſo there cannot be a mediator of a covenant, till there be one that is able to bring both ſides together, and make up a concluſion. And thus Chriſt is the covenant, or the mediator of the covenant, as he manageth all things in it. *Job* hath an excellent expreſſion, to ſhew forth the ſoleneſs of Chriſt to deal in the covenant between God and men; he makes a bitter complaint, and pitiful lamentation; he knew not how to deal with God, and gives this as a reaſon of it, (*Job* ix. 32, 33,) *For he is not a man, as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment; neither is there any day's-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.* A day's-man; it is Chriſt that is this day's-man; it is all one with an umpire, or a mediator: he muſt come between, and lay his hand upon us both: what is that? upon God, and us: the meaning is, he that is the day's-man, the mediator, muſt be ſuch a perſon that hath power on both parties that enter into covenant together: he muſt lay his hand upon God; that is, he muſt have power with God, and bring God to ſuch terms as he propounds; and lay his hand upon man, to bring man on; and, when he lays his hand upon both, then he is a mediator of the covenant. And, in this ſenſe, Chriſt is a covenant, as he hath the managing and diſpatching of all the buſineſs of the covenant, from the firſt to the laſt.

Secondly, As Chriſt is fundamentally, ſo he is materially, the covenant; Chriſt himſelf is the covenant,

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covenant, as he is Christ. This seems strange; but there is an admirable wisdom of God to be adored in this thing: the covenant substantially stands in this; *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Now Christ he is both these in himself; he is God unto his people, and he is the people unto God, and before him. Both these meet in that one Christ, and are both of them admirably illustrated to us, *Matt.* i. 23. where, upon the birth of Christ, the angel saith, *They shall call his name* Immanuel; *which, being interpreted, is God with us:* Christ is, *God with us,* not only as Christ's Godhead did take the human nature simply; but Christ is *God with us,* that is, Christ is so ordered by the Father for men, that the Father may see the deity and humanity made up in one, to wit, Christ's person; and so, consequently, all the people, that are the people of God, are considered in Christ, as part of him: for Christ is considered two ways, either as he consists of the Godhead, and one individual human nature; or, as he consists of that and a compact of many persons considered as members of Christ's mystical body: so Christ is the head, and all those that are in covenant with him, are members; and this head and members together make up one complete and entire body. Consider Christ thus, and then you shall see in him God, the God of his people, and men the people of God, and both these meet together only in Christ.

Christ, in a very few words, doth very excellently set forth this his own being, materially, the covenant,

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covenant, *John* xvii. 22, 23, *And the glory thou gaveſt me, I have given them; that they may be one, as we are one.* Here, *firſt*, he ſpeaks of unity among themſelves, as members have unity in one body: then he goes further in the next verſe, *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;* as much as to ſay thus; I, as I have aſſumed humanity, and beſides the humanity, have aſſumed the members of my myſtical body, ſo I am in them, and they in me; and by this my being one with them, and they one with me, they become one with us both; ſo, God to be the God of his people, and the people to be the people of God, meet both in this one Chriſt, God and man; Chriſt as head united to his members, and they as members in covenant with him.

Thirdly, Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be the covenant equivalently; I mean thus, Though the main ſubſtance of the covenant be fulfilled to believers as ſoon as they are juſtified, that is, while they are ungodly; yet there are particular branches, or rather fruits of the covenant, to be fulfilled to believers in their ſeaſon: to have God more abundantly pouring out himſelf in all manner of graciouſneſs, this is to be fulfilled in ſeaſon. Now, Chriſt is ſaid to be the covenant, as a preſent pawn, or earneſt, delivered into the hands of a perſon, at the very inſtant of his juſtification; which pawn, is of equal value and worth with the whole covenant, when it is fulfilled to the uttermoſt: ſo, Chriſt being given over to men, as a pawn and earneſt, they have, at the firſt inſtant, the

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the whole covenant equivalently. If a man deliver money to another, and he receives a pawn worth the money, then he hath the money in his hand, though not in ſpecie, yet in value, he hath as much as the money is worth; and ſo, by conſequence, it is as much as if he had the money itſelf. Chriſt, delivered over in juſtification, is of equal value with all that is to be fulfilled, when the covenant is fulfilled to the uttermoſt. He being of equal value, it follows, that Chriſt is the covenant by eſtimation, though not in reſpect of the accompliſhment and fulfilling of the ſeveral fruits.

Thus I have done with the firſt branch: this I deſired to clear more fully; becauſe I find the word is marvelouſly puzzled with the mixture of other things beſides Chriſt in the covenant: we will go a little further this morning, becauſe I would diſpatch that I intend, and would not willingly leave any thing, not knowing when, or whether ever I ſhall ſee your faces again. I will therefore enter upon the next thing of great concernment: I hope there hath been no miſtake of what I have ſpoken, and then I know the truth of it will juſtify itſelf againſt all contradiction.

II. The ſecond thing is, what is it for Chriſt to be given for a covenant? I anſwer, All that benefit that Chriſt is, or all that Chriſt can be to a perſon, is a mere deed of gift; and it comes only as a very true and real gift unto men, upon no other conſideration, but ſimply the Father's good will,*

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[* Iſaiah lxv. 1.]

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to make a gift of it; this dependeth neceſſarily upon what we ſhewed before. If that which we have hitherto ſpoken be not true, this cannot be true; if the covenant be with condition, and the condition to be performed for the covenant; then certainly Chriſt is not a mere gift. That which a man buys or pays for, he makes a reckoning of it as due debt: he cannot make a reckoning of it as a gift: but you ſee it plainly in the text, that Chriſt is given to be a covenant; Chriſt is not bought to be a covenant, he is not paid for. Covenants between men I know are thus, if a man has a houſe or land to ſell, there are articles drawn up and agreed upon; and he that muſt have the land, muſt pay for it: it is not ſo in this covenant; but it is as in covenants that are deeds of gifts, which run thus, I will freely beſtow this upon you: ſo God beſtows his Chriſt freely, paſſing him over to men, without any thing from them in conſideration of this Chriſt which is beſtowed. And this imports two things; I ſay, that Chriſt is a gift, imports two things.

Firſt, That in the participation of Chriſt, God requires nothing of man; he expects nothing from man in conſideration of that Chriſt he beſtows upon him. I ſay, he requires nothing, he expects nothing, he will take nothing; nay, he will not give Chriſt unto men, except they will take him freely, without bringing any thing for him.

Secondly, This gift Chriſt, being given unto men, imports that there is no vileneſs, no ſinfulneſs,

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neſs, no kind of wretchedneſs of man, that can be any bar to man from having a full part and portion in this Chriſt: a gift implies them both. I ſhall open them both, as clear as may be.

Firſt, I ſay, Chriſt is conveyed unto men as a gift; without the Father's requiring any thing of them, or expecting any thing from them; but only barring them from bringing, or thinking to bring, any thing to this end, that they may have a part or ſhare in Chriſt.

I ſhall firſt declare, and make clear, that it is directly contrary to the nature of a gift (conſidered really as a gift) to require, or expect any thing in conſideration of that which is given. When things are paſſed over to a man upon conſideration, either they are paſſed over by bargain and ſale, or elſe by way of bribe. When a man deſires his cauſe may go well in a ſuit of law, he will give the judge ſomething; but the conſideration muſt be, that the judge ſhall carry the cauſe on his ſide; this that the judge receives, is not a gift, but a bribe, becauſe ſomething muſt be done for it. When a man muſt have ſuch and ſuch lands, or ſuch and ſuch goods, and there is a contract, you muſt give me ſo much money, and you ſhall have them; theſe lands and goods are not gifts, when money muſt be paid for them.

If we muſt bring any thing to the Father in conſideration of Chriſt the covenant, then here is a bargain and ſale between the Father and us: I will give you my Chriſt, but you muſt bring me works, to wit, broken, and clean, and changed hearts,

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hearts, and the like: this is a mere bargain and ſale. In *Rom.* iv. 4. you ſhall find plainly and clearly, how the apoſtle directly overthrows the being of a gift upon this ſuppoſition; if it could be received, that a man muſt bring any thing to his juſtification, he plainly affirms, a gift ceaſeth to be a gift when any ſuch thing comes in; *Now to him that worketh, is the reward reckoned not of grace, but of debt:* mark, I pray you, well, *to him that worketh:* that is, would you bring your humiliations, your prayers, as conditions that God may perform his covenant? Do you bring any thing in the world, and work any inherent righteouſneſs? Then ſaith the apoſtle, the reward, that is, the accompliſhment of the covenant, is not reckoned of grace; if you bring works, the gift ceaſeth to be a gift, it muſt be reckoned to be a debt. Either then you muſt lay down all works, and let them ceaſe in the buſineſs of partaking of Chriſt, or elſe you muſt conclude you muſt not receive Chriſt of grace, but of debt: and the apoſtle doth make it more clear, *Rom.* xi. 6, *And if by grace,* (that is, by gift, for grace and gift, you muſt underſtand, are all one: grace is nothing but the favour of God freely, and of his own accord communicated; *And if by grace*) *then it is no more of works; otherwiſe grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwiſe work is no more work.* If you bring grace unto works, or works unto grace; either the one, or the other, or both, are made void: as much as to ſay, theſe two things are in-

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conſiſtent, they cannot ſtand together, that we ſhould partake of Chriſt through grace and works both; they will not ſtand together: grace muſt ſtand alone, or works alone; for one directly overthrows the other.

And, beloved, to ſpeak freely to you of theſe work-mongers, theſe buyers of Chriſt, that would bring ſomething with them to partake of Chriſt; what would they bring? They ſay they will bring a good heart, or a changed life. I aſk, what prize is this you bring? Do you bring any thing of your own, or that which is God's already? Suppoſe your hearts be never ſo purged and cleanſed; what bring you to God? You bring that which already is his own; as much as to ſay, a man owes another a thouſand pounds, and he will come and bring him this thouſand pounds, for lands worth fifty pounds by the year. No, he muſt bring a thouſand pounds more, if he will purchaſe the land: even ſo it is for a perſon to bring works for Chriſt, which works thou oweſt unto God already; no, firſt pay thy firſt debt which thou oweſt, and then if thou haſt any more, bring that unto God to purchaſe Chriſt withal. But alas, when you have done all, you are unprofitable ſervants; for all you have done is not yours, it was due from you before; how then can any thing you do be a conſideration to purchaſe Chriſt withal?

Moreover, you that will bring works, and, in conſideration of them, expect a part in Chriſt; what are the works you bring? A whip you ſhall have

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have as ſoon as a Chriſt, in regard of your works: Oh, the filthineſs of all the works of men, as they work them! There is nothing but filthineſs in them; *Yea,* (ſaith *Paul*) *I count all things dung, that I may be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs:* therefore, as it is moſt preſumptuous pride in men, ſo it is the groſſeſt ignorance that can be, to dream of any thing that they have, do, or can do, in the partaking of Chriſt; they directly overthrow the nature of a gift: haſt thou but one thought once, that God will accept thee in Chriſt, upon conſideration that thou haſt performed thus and thus; this very thought directly deſtroys Chriſt, conſidered as a gift: for if he be a gift, then he comes without any conſideration whatſoever.

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SERMON VII.

The New Covenant of Free Grace.

ISAIAH xlii. 6, 7.

And I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.

IN the next place, as it is against the nature of a gift, so God doth not expect, nor will accept of any thing from men in consideration of Christ; and, for this, the scriptures are plain and clear, that the Father expects nothing in the world of men; no one qualification or spiritual disposition, before, or upon the communicating of his Son Christ unto men: I will but name some few passages to clear this to you, that I may not seem to come in my own name, in this that I have delivered.

Consider, among other passages, that in *Isa.* lv. 1. it is plain there, you may see, that God looks for nothing in the world of men; be they what they will,

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will, be they in the worſt condition, no matter what it is, they are the men to whom Chriſt offers himſelf; *Ho, every one that thirſteth,* (ſaith Chriſt) that is, every one that hath but a mind to come to him, every one that would take him, may have him: *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye ſpend your money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs.* Eat, but not buy; for it is ſaid, *Buy without money;* you may eat without price, and that which you ſhall eat is fatneſs. Mark what follows, *Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your ſouls ſhall live; and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of* David: here you ſee the covenant mentioned. But what doth God require here in the covenant? No money, no price; the covenant runs all upon mercy; it is an everlaſting covenant indeed, and an everlaſting covenant of mercy. Now mercy is the doing a thing only and merely of gift: if a man will forgive a debtor, and aſk nothing of him, then he is a merciful man: ſo far as men give, ſo far are they merciful; ſo far as they ſell, there is no mercy in that. But here is neither money, nor price, nor any thing* at all in conſideration of the covenant.

[* Luke vii. 42.]

Likewiſe,

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Likewiſe, in *Hoſea* xiv. 4. God ſaith by the prophet, *I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from them:* he will love you freely, that is the term: he will aſk nothing for that good he will do unto you, it ſhall be freely; and what is more free than gift?

Look alſo into that notable place, worthy of all conſideration, *Eph.* ii. where the apoſtle ſpeaks moſt admirable ſweetly to this point, of giving and communicating Chriſt, and all that is Chriſt's, unto men, merely of grace, merely of gift, without conſideration of any thing in the world; and there you have the reaſon, why God will do it merely of gift, and upon no other ground or cauſe at all, (in verſe 4,) ſaying, *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us;* (here is the great principle that gives being to all that follows) *even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt, (by grace ye are ſaved)* Mark what follows, *and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus: that, in the ages to come, he might ſhew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindneſs towards us through Chriſt Jeſus: for by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God; not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt.* Here you ſee how notably the apoſtle takes off all things in the world, whereby man may imagine to move God to ſhew kindneſs, and give his Chriſt unto them; and attributes all to the riches of God's grace, becauſe of that *love wherewith he loved*

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loved us. Hence it is that he beſtows Chriſt by grace; *and by this grace are we ſaved, and that not of ourſelves, not of our works, leſt any ſhould boaſt.*

I will not recite many places: one more, and then I have done with this. Look into the laſt of the *Revelations,* you ſhall ſee Chriſt is ſo a gift paſſed over unto men, that God looks for, aſks, requires nothing of men to their partaking of him: in verſe 17, *Let him that is athirſt come, and whoſo will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* No matter for bringing of any thing with you; have you a mind to him? take him freely, God ſcorns to make a ſale of his Son. If men take him as a deed of gift, well and good; if they will have him upon other terms, God never means to part with him. I tell you, could you bring angelical perfection and obedience, and preſent that unto the Father as a motive to him to beſtow his Chriſt upon you; if you dare offer the perfecteſt righteouſneſs in the world for Chriſt; I ſay, you ſhall be accurſed for it. *If we,* (ſaith the apoſtle, *Gal.* i. 8,) *or an angel from heaven, preach any other goſpel unto you, than that we have preached unto you;* any other goſpel, than ſalvation, and participation of Chriſt, by grace and free gift (for that is the doctrine he had eſtabliſhed before, and, through the whole epiſtle to the *Galatians,* doth maintain) *let ſuch a perſon be accurſed,* ſaith *Paul.* And, concerning thoſe that will preach any other doctrine, or will eſtabliſh any righteouſneſs of man, and pervert the people of God from the ſincerity of

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of the doctrine and gospel they have received; the apostle is so eager against them, that he breaks out into this expression, *I would they were even cut off, which trouble you*, in the same epistle, chap. v. 12. and upon the self same ground we have in hand, he thus expresses himself; and, why? because they overthrew the great intent of the Lord, and those great thoughts he hath of himself; namely, that the world may see what a God of grace he is. If a man comes with works towards the enjoyment of Christ, he overthrows the grace of God, and frustrates the great end for which God sent Christ into the world: for as you see it plainly there in the epistle to the *Ephesians*, the place before mentioned, the Lord therefore comes to give Christ, to set forth *the praise of the glory of his free grace.*

Secondly, This gift (Christ I mean) given as a covenant, imports unto you, that as the Father looks for nothing in men to partake of Christ, so also it doth imply, there is nothing in men, though never so vile, that can debar a person from a part in this Christ. Some will not have Christ, except they can pay for him; others dare not meddle with Christ, because they are so vile and wretched creatures, that they think it impossible that Christ should belong to such wretched persons as they are. You know not (saith one) what an abominable sinner I am; you look upon others, but their sins are but ordinary; but mine are of a deep dye, and I shall die in them: the rebellion of my heart, is another kind of rebellion than is in others.

Beloved,

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Beloved, let me tell you freely from the Lord; let men deem you as they will, and make yourſelf as bad as you can, I tell you, from the Lord, and I will make it good, there is not that ſinfulneſs that can be imagined in a creature, that can be able to ſeparate or debar any of you from a part in Chriſt; even while you are thus ſinful, Chriſt may be your Chriſt. Nay, I go further; ſuppoſe one perſon, in this congregation, ſhould not only be the vileſt ſinner in the world, but ſhould have all the ſins of others, beſides what he himſelf hath committed; if all theſe were laid upon the back of him, he ſhould be a greater ſinner than now he is; yet, if he ſhould bear all the ſins of others, as I ſaid, there is no bar to this perſon, but Chriſt may be his portion; *He bore the ſins of many*, (ſaith the text) but he bare them not as his own, he bare them for many. Suppoſe the many, that are ſinners, ſhould have all their ſins tranſlated to one in particular; ſtill there is no more ſin than Chriſt died for, though they be all collected together. If other men's ſins were tranſlated upon you, and they had none, then they needed no Chriſt; all the need they have of Chriſt, were tranſlated to you, and then the whole of Chriſt's obedience ſhould be yours.

Do but obſerve the ſtrain of the goſpel, you ſhall find that no ſin in the world can be a bar to hinder a perſon from having a part in this Chriſt that is given: look upon the condition of perſons (as they are revealed in the goſpel) to whom Chriſt is reached out: and the conſideration of their

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their perſons will plainly ſhew to you, that there is no kind of ſinfulneſs can bar a perſon from having a part in Chriſt.

Look into *Ezek.* xvi. quite through; the perſon is there conſidered in a ſtate of blood, of menſtruouſneſs, of vileneſs, and greateſt filthineſs that can be ſuppoſed; and when *no eye could pity* ſuch a perſon, *or do any good to him; I paſſed by thee,* (ſaith Chriſt) *thy time was the time of love, I ſware unto thee, I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine.* Conſtrue this in a ſpiritual ſenſe, conceive of a ſpiritual eſtate of filth, proportionable to a natural eſtate of filth. That very time of the vileſt of our ſpiritual filthineſs, is the time of Chriſt's love when he enters into covenant. Yea, but ſure the caſe is altered, before Chriſt actually ſwears. No; *then waſhed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly waſhed away thy blood.* When? even then when *I ſware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine.* Firſt he did ſware, and then he did waſh them: and not waſh them, and then ſware unto them, and enter into covenant with them. Firſt, *I entered into covenant with thee, then waſhed I thee with water, and then put I jewels upon thee, &c.* The firſt thing he doth, is, he enters into covenant, and the people become his people, and then he takes them in hand, and waſheth and purgeth them, and not before.

Conſider Chriſt's own expreſſion, *I came to ſeek, and to ſave that which was loſt; I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance; the whole*

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whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick: here ſtill the perſons are conſidered in the worſt condition, (as ſome might think) rather than in the beſt. Our Saviour is pleaſed to expreſs himſelf in a direct contrary way to the opinion of men. *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners:* the poor publican that had nothing to plead for himſelf, went away more juſtified than the proud phariſee, that pleaded with God; *I thank thee that I am not ſuch an one.*

Men think righteouſneſs brings them near to Chriſt: beloved, righteouſneſs is that which puts a man away from Chriſt:* ſtumble not at the expreſſion, it is the clear truth of the goſpel:† not ſimply a doing of ſervice and duty, doth put away from Chriſt; but upon the doing of duty and ſervice, to expect acceptance with Chriſt, or participation in Chriſt, this kind of righteouſneſs is the only ſeparation between Chriſt and a people; and whereas no ſinfulneſs in the world can debar a people, their righteouſneſs may debar them.

I need not tell you, what I have ſo often mentioned, that there muſt be a believing in him that juſtifies the ungodly, *Rom.* iv. what can you look for of an ungodly perſon? If there can be any bar in the world to hinder a man from taking Chriſt, you would think it ſhould be ungodli-

* When it is truſted to, and depended upon, and put in the room of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs; or when it is brought to fit a man for Chriſt, and give him a right and claim to him, and his benefits.

[† Matt. v. 20.]

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neſs; it is the ground of moſt, and all men's fears. But if the term ungodlineſs be not bad enough, conſider, Chriſt goes further, even unto rebellion; he hath received gifts for the rebellious, *Pſalm* lxviii. 18, *Thou haſt aſcended on high, and led captivity captive, thou haſt received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious alſo, that the Lord God might dwell among them.*

But ſome may be ready to ſay to me, Though God be never ſo free in giving Chriſt unto men; yet they may never have a part in him, except they have hands to take, and receive him.

I anſwer, I beſeech you conſider, and I anſwer peremptorily, that though men have no hands to take Chriſt, yet may they receive him. I will clear this a little to you, firſt by illuſtration, or by way of ſimilitude: a poor indigent perſon is ſpeechleſs, he hath never a tongue; he is handleſs, he hath never a hand: he cannot aſk with the tongue, he cannot take with the hand; if you have a mind to give, I aſk, can you not give to ſuch a perſon, becauſe he hath not a tongue to ſpeak, nor a hand to take? you may behold, and ſee the pitiful caſe of ſuch a man, and your compaſſions may be ſtirred in you; and whereas he cannot put a garment upon his own naked back, yet you may provide raiment, and put it upon his back with your hands, as well as if he had put it on himſelf: and thus God deals in beſtowing Chriſt upon men; we are dumb, and cannot ſpeak, *We know not what to aſk as we ought*, ſaith the apoſtle, *Rom.* viii. 26. but God being rich in

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in compaſſion, he beholds our miſerableneſs; his own bowels ſtir him up.* Although there be no language in the creature to move him; yet out of theſe bowels of his, he will ſhew pity and mercy to us, and reach out his Chriſt, to thoſe that have no hands to receive him, no faith to believe in him. It is the Lord puts this Chriſt on the back of thoſe perſons† on whom he hath pity and compaſſion. I ſay, that although we have no hand, yet the Lord puts this his Chriſt upon us; it is not we that put him on, but the Lord that puts him upon us.

Secondly, To reſolve the caſe more fully and clearly, obſerve a diſtinction very needful to be obſerved and conſidered: there is a twofold receiving of Chriſt; there is, *firſt*, a paſſive recipiency; *ſecondly*, there is an active recipiency.‡

Firſt, There is a paſſive receiving of Chriſt, and that is, ſo that Chriſt is received without any hands; but in an active receiving of him, he is not received without hands: you will ſay, what is this paſſive receiving of Chriſt? I anſwer, a paſſive receiving of Chriſt, is juſt ſuch a receiving of him, as when a froward patient takes a purge, or ſome bitter phyſic; he ſhuts his teeth againſt it, but the phyſician forceth his mouth open, and

[* Zech. ix. 11.] [† Iſaiah lxi. 10.]

‡ And an excellent diſtinction it is; the learned *Hoornbeeck* takes notice of it, and has theſe words concerning it; "Neither "do we reject ſome diſtinctions of theirs (*i. e.* Dr. *Criſp*, and "others, called *Antinomians*) as of the reception of Chriſt, "*primum* paſſivæ, *tum* activæ, firſt paſſive, then active." *Summa Controv.* cap. 10. p. 720.

pours

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pours it down his throat, and ſo it works againſt his will,* by the over-ruling power of one over him, that knows it is good for him. Thus I ſay, there is a paſſive recipiency, or receiving of Chriſt, which is the firſt receiving of him; when Chriſt comes by the gift of the Father to a perſon, whilſt he is in the ſtubborneſs of his own heart, being froward and croſs; and the Father forces open the ſpirit of that man, and pours in his Son in ſpite of the receiver.†

There is ſuch a kind of recipiency mentioned in ſcripture, *Jerem.* xxxi. 18, 19, *I have ſurely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf thus, Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned, thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented: and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh: I was*

[* John iv. 16, 17, 18.]

† This is to be underſtood of the ſtate and condition, in which a man is, when God comes firſt to work upon him, in which he is paſſive; and the ſimile made uſe of, of a phyſician forcing a man's mouth open, and pouring phyſic againſt his will, is intended to illuſtrate, and does illuſtrate, the enmity and rebellion of the heart of man againſt Chriſt and his grace; and ſhews how diſagreeable, to the carnal mind, are the methods which God takes when he firſt works upon it, either by afflictive providences, or by letting the law into the conſcience, which works wrath there; and not, as D. W. ſuggeſts in his *Goſpel-Truth*, &c. p. 101. as if men were ſaid to receive Chriſt againſt their wills: for, as the Doctor after obſerves, when Chriſt has entered into the ſoul, and has revealed himſelf, and ſhewn it his excellency and his beauty, it embraces him, and holds him faſt; when his power comes upon it, it is made willing to receive him, whom, before, it had a diſlike of, and an averſion to.

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aſhamed, yea, even confounded. Mark how *Ephraim* (who is the repreſentative of the church) ſtands affected and diſpoſed; when God comes firſt to tame and break the ſpirit of *Ephraim*, God is fain to get upon *Ephraim*, as an horſe-rider is fain to get upon an unruly horſe, that was never broken; he muſt fetter him upon all four, that he may ſtand ſtill before he get up. So God muſt fetter *Ephraim* before he can get up, before he can tame him; *I was as a bullock, unaccuſtomed to the yoke*, nothing but kicking and ſpurning at firſt; afterwards *Ephraim* becomes more gentle; *When I was converted, I ſmote upon my thigh, and was confounded:* but before, *Ephraim* was a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke. Hence it is, that the entrance of Chriſt into a perſon is attributed unto the power of Chriſt; *Thy people ſhall be a willing people in the day of thy power;* the power of the Lord muſt overcome a perſon, before Chriſt can have a poſſeſſion of him, in regard of the croſſneſs of the ſpirit of man to the pleaſure of Chriſt.

At the firſt, then, there may be a paſſive receiving of Chriſt, by which Chriſt may enter and doth enter into the ſpirit,* though the ſoul reach not forth the hand to take him in; but rather on the contrary part, fight againſt him by keeping him from entering: but now when this Chriſt is poured into the ſpirit of a man by the power of the Lord, then he begins to work, to break, and to tame the ſpirit, to be at his own beck and pleaſure: when Chriſt hath once re-

[* Acts ix. 3.]

vealed

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vealed himſelf, and made the ſoul behold his beauty, and acquainted it with his excellency, then it begins to embrace him, and to hold him faſt, and will not let him go.

Here comes in the ſecond act of receiving Chriſt, when we take him, perceiving he is a friend and coming for good, and that there is no good but by him. Chriſt is conſidered as given of the Father; and being given, the Father hath no regard to any thing* a man can do for him, or any thing he can do againſt him.†

But it may be, before I leave this, you will aſk, is not unbelief a bar to have a part in Chriſt?

I anſwer, It is a bar to hinder the manifeſtation of Chriſt in the ſpirit; but it is not a bar to hinder one from having a part in Chriſt, on whom God doth beſtow him. It is true, that you, nor I, can ſay by experience that Chriſt is ours, until we believe; as long as we continue in total unbelief, we cannot conclude to our own ſpirits that Chriſt is ours: but unbelief is not ſimply a bar to the beſtowing of Chriſt, to ſuch a perſon; he beſtows him without any regard‡ to belief, or unbelief: if unbelief ſhould be a bar to hinder Chriſt from being beſtowed upon men, where is the man to whom Chriſt ſhould be beſtowed? There is no perſon under heaven conſidered ſimply as ungodly, and under the notion of ungodlineſs, but he is conſidered as an unbeliever, as well as a ſinner in

[* Micah vi. 6. 7.] [† Gen. xx. 6.] [‡ Luke xix. 5.]

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other reſpects; ſo that to the Father's giving of Chriſt, unbelief is not a bar; only to the inward ſatisfaction of the ſoul and ſpirit, unbelief is a bar; a ſoul cannot be reſolved till it doth believe.

III. And ſo now I come to conſider the third thing I propoſed, namely,

What it is for Chriſt to be given to open the blind eyes?

There are two things very remarkable in it, that he is given to do this: for hence I infer, and the thing itſelf will clearly bear it:

Firſt, That Chriſt is actually paſſed over to a ſoul, and a poſſeſſion of Chriſt is delivered unto perſons, before ever their blind eyes are opened, or they come out of priſon; that is, before they have any gracious qualifications whatſoever; and this is a truth that follows upon the former, that Chriſt himſelf is the firſt ſpiritual gift that the Father doth beſtow upon any, before there be wrought any opening of the eyes, which is the firſt of all gracious qualifications wrought in a man.

Secondly, That the opening of the eyes, and bringing the priſoners out of priſon, is the ſole work of Chriſt; none doth this buſineſs but Chriſt alone when he is once given.

The firſt will need a little clearing (and thereby the ſecond will be ſufficiently evidenced) being a truth of very great concern, and yet ſeldom ſeriouſly conſidered; I ſay, that Chriſt is actually given and paſſed over to men, and made really

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theirs, before ever there be any gracious qualifications put into the ſoul of ſuch a man. I ſay, as before, obſerve this caution, I ſpeak of God's giving Chriſt unto men, not of the manifeſtation of him unto a man to be his: there is, and muſt be faith, as I ſaid before, for the manifeſtation of him to be ours; but there is no qualification wrought in the heart of any perſon, before Chriſt be actually paſſed over, and made his in the covenant. Now, I ſay, Chriſt is given and paſſed over to ſuch a perſon, before he has any gracious qualifications; I do not mean, as ſome do, that God did actually decree Chriſt, unto ſuch and ſuch, before he put any qualifications in them; this is a truth indeed; but I ſay further, That God gives actual poſſeſſion of Chriſt, and Chriſt takes poſſeſſion of that perſon, before there be any qualifications wrought in him: now Chriſt is given, not only to perform ſome common acts of God's providence, but he is given as the covenant itſelf; he enters, and actually juſtifies a perſon, before any qualification be wrought in him.

Now I ſhall endeavour to clear this, by all poſſible evidence I can; the ſcripture is plain for it, in *Iſa.* lxi. 1, 2, 3. and ſo forward; there you ſhall ſee that Chriſt is actually given unto men, before any gracious qualifications whatſoever be wrought in them; *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,* ſaith Chriſt; for they are his words, as he himſelf applies them, in the ſermon he preached, *Luke* iv. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach the*

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the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised.

Observe it, I pray you, Here Christ hath a business to do in the world; which is, *To bind up the broken-hearted;* and, the Lord hath anointed him to this business. What is that anointing? The Lord hath separated him, designed him to it; and according to his designation, places him where he may do it; this is meant by anointing. Now, when a man is set apart, and sent about such a business: he must be there corporally or virtually before that is done, which he is sent to do; he is sent to do a thing, therefore he must be there where it is to be done: a man is not said to do a thing, when it is done before he come; if Christ be sent to bind up the broken hearted, and if it be his business; certainly they are not bound up before he comes to bind them; and if he comes to bind them up, then he is present before they are bound up.

But, peradventure, you will say, by this text, here are broken hearts first, before Christ be sent to bind them up; therefore there must be broken hearts before Christ come to the soul.

To this I answer, That a broken heart is to be considered in a double sense, either, *first*, Simply for a heart undone; or, *secondly*, For one sensible of its own undoing: you know, men are said to be undone, and broke, when their estates are broke, and their credit cracked; and, they may be said

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to be broke, when they have examined their own books, and find that they are, and so seek to their creditors to make agreement: they may be considered as broken, supposing and considering what their condition is simply in itself, as they are undone in it; or else, as they apprehend themselves to be undone, and so make agreement.

Now, these two kinds of brokenness of heart considered, I answer, It is most certainly true in the first sense, there is a broken heart, before Christ is considered as present to bind it up; that is, men are really undone, before he comes to restore them; but these persons are not sensible of their own brokenness of heart, until Christ comes and makes them sensible of it.

Therefore, if you will speak of the sense of breaking, I flatly affirm, Christ is actually given, and is come unto the soul, before sensibleness be wrought in the soul. Mark but the covenant as it is recited, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. who is it deals with the heart of man to take away the stoniness of it, and to give a meltingness unto it? *I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh:* who is that? It is he that did obtain a more excellent ministry, by how much he was the mediator of a better covenant; even the mediator of this covenant, and it is he that takes away the stony heart; and, if he breaks it, how can there be said to be a broken heart, before Christ comes to do it?

Therefore, in brief, know this, Christ is sent unto men, as to bind up their hearts, when they are

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are broken, ſo graciouſly to break them, when they are hard; firſt, he breaks them, then he binds them up; *He is ſent to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of priſon-doors to the priſoners:* people think by their humiliations, ſorrows, mournings, and obedience, and ſuch like, to get Chriſt; but it is plain that the very ſpirit of mourning is the work of Chriſt upon a perſon, and he is preſent to work it too. *Zech.* xii. 10, *I will pour upon the houſe of* David, *and the inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication: and they ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and mourn:* who was it that poured this ſpirit of grace, ſupplication, and mourning? I, ſaith Chriſt. I, who was that I? It is he that was pierced, on whom they ſhall look that had pierced him; *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced;* this is he that poured out the ſpirit of ſupplication and mourning; ſo, if it be Chriſt that was pierced, as is plain, then it is alſo plain that he poured out the ſpirit of grace, ſupplication, and mourning: how then can they mourn before Chriſt comes, when it is he, after he is come, that doth this thing?

Object any qualification whatſoever, and it will appear moſt evident and plain, that it is Chriſt himſelf, after he is come, that works it; even faith itſelf, which is called the radical grace of all graces, is not given until Chriſt himſelf be given to men, who works this very faith; *Heb.* xii. 2, *Looking* (ſaith the apoſtle) *unto Jeſus the*

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the author and finiſher of our faith: he is the author; what faith can there be then till he comes to work it?

Conſider, *Pſalm* lxviii. 18, compared with *Eph.* iv. 8. and you ſhall plainly ſee Chriſt is given unto men, before there be any qualifications of any grace whatſoever in them; *Thou haſt received gifts for the rebellious*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt; *Thou haſt given gifts unto men*, ſaith the apoſtle: put them both together, Chriſt received for, and gave gifts unto rebellious men; conſider, I pray, what gracious diſpoſitions, and qualifications are conſiderable in rebellious men; as they are rebellious, there can be none conſidered: but Chriſt received, for, and gave gifts to, the rebellious; therefore, he is given, and accordingly gives whatſoever any perſon hath, before he hath any thing.

There are many notable arguments in ſcripture moſt abſolutely eſtabliſhing this truth; that Chriſt is given and made over unto men before they have any qualification whatſoever. *Col.* i. 18. where Chriſt is called, *The head of the body, the church, and the beginning*. Theſe two metaphors illuſtrate and eſtabliſh this truth.

Firſt, Chriſt is the beginning. He that is the beginning of all things, is before all things; not only in the being of nature before all things, but actually preſent before all things be begun. He that is the builder of the houſe, doth not come after it is begun to be built; but he is preſent at the place before a ſtone is laid, becauſe he is the man

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man that must lay it, he is the beginner of it; and if he be the beginning, whatsoever is begun, is after him that is the beginning.

Secondly, Christ is the head. This is the other metaphor, whereby is set forth, that Christ must upon necessity be in the soul, be actually passed over unto men, before they can have any gracious qualifications. A head is the fountain of all animal and sensitive spirits, and of all motion; without a head, a man cannot hear, see, walk, feel, stir, nor do any thing, seeing all these operations come from the head. Consider the body as headless, and all the senses are absent, and without a head nothing is done. Christ is the head of his church, (so saith the apostle) that is, he is the fountain of all spiritual sense and motion. You may as soon conceive that a man is able to see whilst he hath not a head; as to think, a man can have spiritual eyes, whether the eye of faith to behold Christ, or the eyes of mourning to lament one's wretchedness, before there be actually the presence and conjunction of Christ the head, unto such a body. Beloved, to think a man can have any spiritual sight, before Christ be actually united to the soul, is all one, as for a man to think to see, before he hath eyes. The eyes are placed in the head; both the organs, faculties, and spirits all are in the head; how can a man see, that hath neither eyes nor spirits to feed them? which he hath not, while he hath not a head, where all these are planted. Christ must be the eye, and present, to give sight; therefore,

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fore, the ſcripture expreſsly ſays, *That he is given for a covenant to open the blind eyes:* if to open them, then they are not opened before he gives them ſight.

And, *thirdly*, As Chriſt is called a head, and a beginning; ſo alſo life, frequently in the ſcripture. *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me*, John xiv. 6. Can a man be an active creature, before there be life breathed into him? *The Lord*, (ſaith the text) at the creation, *breathed into man the breath of life, and ſo he became a living ſoul.* He was like a ſtone, till he had life: but now, ſaith the apoſtle, *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. *And, by the grace of God, I am that I am, and his grace that was beſtowed upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all.* *Paul* was an active ſoul. How? *By the grace of God*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. That is, as a body, without a ſoul is dead; ſo every perſon, in ſpiritual actions, is wholly dead, till Chriſt the ſoul of the ſoul be infuſed into him, to animate and enliven him.

I ſhall not ſpend more time in urging more arguments; though I might be large to ſhew that Chriſt is the firſt thing given unto us, before all other whatſoever. For if this light be not enough, we muſt wait till the Lord in his time will reveal his truth.

IV. And now in a word or two conſider, who they are, to whom Chriſt is given to be a covenant. All this is good news, will ſome ſay, to thoſe unto whom it is ſent. Many thouſands cry out,

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out, Oh, but it is none of my portion, nor my portion, that Chriſt ſhould be given as a covenant to me.

I ſhall not be large in this, though ſome may expect it; the text will tell in part, who thoſe are to whom he is given for a covenant, to wit, the people, and the Gentiles, one, as well as another. God gives Chriſt to men without reſpect of perſons, to *Jews* and Gentiles. You ſhall find through the whole courſe of the ſcripture, the perſons to whom Chriſt is exhibited, are ſtill expreſſed in the moſt general terms: if a man would know for whom he came, it is anſwered, *He came to ſeek and to ſave thoſe that are loſt; in due time, he came to die for the ungodly;* and *came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance; and while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* The ſcripture runs upon this ſtrain; why then ſhould any man come and cry, *He died not for me, he is not given for me?* Why, art thou a convinced ſinner? He was given for thee, if thou art truly ſaying with the publican, *God be merciful to me a ſinner.*

The king puts forth a proclamation, and in it he pardons all thieves: what mad or fooliſh thief will ſay, Oh, but the king doth not mean me, he may mean others, but not me! Why, he means thieves in general, he excepts none; why ſhouldeſt thou ſay, not me? If there be the name of thieves in general, without particular mentioning of ſome, they will come in, and take their portion. Beloved, ſo Chriſt deals with men, he is given to the people, to the Gentiles; art thou of the people? art

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art thou of the Gentiles? If thou art, why is he not given to thee? Nay, more, it is the people and Gentiles conſidered as ſinners?

But ſome will be ready to ſay, You know he is not given to all people, and all Gentiles; ſome do miſcarry, and poſſibly I may be among them that do miſcarry: but how ſhall I know that I am among the number of ſuch ſinners that ſhall not miſcarry; and my portion is in this Chriſt?

Beloved, here obſerve by the way, now we are ſpeaking of knowing whether Chriſt be mine, or no, not ſimply of Chriſt's being ours, but of his manifeſtation, or of knowing him to be ours, how ſhall I know it? You will ſay, There are labyrinths, in which a man may walk, and by hap may chance to hit the right, in the finding of this great truth, ſo much ſearched after, how a man may know whether Chriſt be his or no. To lead you a plain and ſure way; the beſt way for any man to know whether Chriſt be his or no, is to conſider the conveyance in which he is made over to men; ſee the terms of conveyance, and according to theſe terms, ſuch is the ſecurity of your title. Now the terms of conveyance (as I have often told you) are only ſuch as in a deed of gift, and a deed of gift univerſally exhibited and reached out. Therefore, I muſt tell you, there is no better way to know your portion in Chriſt, than upon the general tender of the goſpel, to conclude abſolutely he is yours, and ſo, without any more ado, to take him, as tendered to you, on his word;*

[* Iſaiah lv. 1.]

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and this taking of him, upon a general tender,* is the greateſt ſecurity in the world, that Chriſt is yours. Say unto your ſouls (and let not this be contradicted, ſeeing Chriſt hath reached out himſelf to ſinners as ſinners) My part is as good as any man's; ſet down thy reſt here; queſtion it not, but believe it; it is as good ſecurity as God can make thee: he hath promiſed, venture thy ſoul upon it, without ſeeking for further ſecurity. But, ſome will ſay, he doth not belong to me: why not to thee? he belongs to ſinners, as ſinners; and if there be no worſe than ſinfulneſs, rebellion, and enmity in thee, he belongs to thee, as well as to any in the world:† and there is nothing at all can give thee a certainty he is thine, but receiving him on theſe terms; *He came to his own, and his own received him not; but, to as many as received*

* This is the principal paſſage on which the *Dutch* profeſſor, *Hoornbeeck*, has laid the charge of holding univerſal redemption to the Doctor, concluding, from this general tender, or offer of Chriſt to all, that he held the univerſal ſatisfaction of Chriſt for all, and that all have an equal portion in it; from whence they might be aſſured of Chriſt as theirs, and not from any condition in themſelves: and, indeed, the univerſal offer, cannot be ſupported without ſuppoſing univerſal redemption; which thoſe, who are fond of, and yet profeſs particular redemption, would do well to conſider. See *Summa Controv.* p. 703. l. 10.

† This is putting it upon a much better foot than the general tender; which is no ſecurity to any, of Chriſt being his; nor even general redemption itſelf, ſince all have not a portion in him, or are ſaved by him; but, Chriſt dying for the worſt and chief of ſinners, and his promiſe to receive, and his actually receiving them as ſuch, are the beſt ſecurity, and on which a poor ſinner, under a deep ſenſe of ſin may rely; and be encouraged to apply to Chriſt, and lay hold upon him as his own Saviour. See the laſt paragraph of the next ſermon, where the Doctor mentions a better ſecurity than the general tender.

him,

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him, (mark that) *he gave power to become the ſons of God.*

He receiveth ſinners, as ſinners; he never ſhut out one of all thoſe thouſands, that came upon the tender of the goſpel; he never put any by; *But, to as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the ſons of God.* Bring me any one inſtance in the whole book of God, of any one that hath come to Chriſt, and taken him upon the tender of the goſpel, and yet he hath put this perſon by. It is true, in a ſhallow matter, concerning a bodily cure, the woman comes to Chriſt, and at the firſt, he would not hear, then he calls her dog; yet before they parted, Chriſt not only accepts the woman, but breaks out into admiration, *Oh! woman, great is thy faith!* But, I ſay, in the buſineſs of partaking of Chriſt, ſhew me an inſtance of any in all the book of God, that have ventured upon the general tender* of Chriſt, which was rejected. If there be no example, in all the ſcripture, from whence fetch you this bitterneſs of your own ſpirits, that you may not, that you dare not cloſe with Chriſt?

But, you will ſay to me, If this taking of him be the beſt ſecurity, how ſhall I know whether I believe or no? Or how ſhall I know whether this my taking is not a counterfeit, but a ſolid, ſubſtantial, real, taking of Chriſt.

I anſwer, By the reality of the thing. Do you it indeed? If you do it indeed, it is a real taking. If a man ſhould aſk you, How do you know the

[* Rev. xxii. 17.]

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ſun ſhines? The light of it ſhews itſelf, and, by its light, we know it ſhines. How ſhall I know I believe? There is a light in faith that diſcovers itſelf unto men. The ſoul that really cloſes with Chriſt, may conclude he doth. If you give ſixpence to a poor man, and then aſk him, How do you know I have given you it, and that you have it? Why, ſaith he, I have it in my hand, and find, and feel I have it. So, aſk your hearts this queſtion, How do I know I believe in Chriſt? Do I caſt my heart upon this truth? Do I receive it as one that I do believe, or do I reject it, or will not receive it? Then I do not believe: but if you ſit down, and reſt upon it, and receive it, and do in reality believe it; then you may abſolutely conclude Chriſt is yours. In reſpect of time, I cannot amplify any further: but, I hope, for the preſent, this will give ſatisfaction. A word or two for application, and ſo I will conclude.

Is this a truth, as hath been by ſcripture proved to you, *That Chriſt is given a covenant to men, to open their blind eyes?* Then it is plain, they begin at the wrong end of the bottom, who begin to wind up at the graciouſneſs of their own ſpirits, from thence to have comfort. If you begin at any other end than at Chriſt to get grace and comfort, you do as they do that take the inmoſt end of the bottom of the thread, and begin to ravel there; ſo that little or no work is done, but much and many a knot, and broken ends made, and the work quite ſpoiled; whereas, if they begun at

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at the utmoſt end of the bottom, it would have run without diſturbance.

Beloved, Chriſt is given to open men's blind eyes; go whither you will, you ſhall never have your eyes ſpiritually opened, except you go to him: Oh, what a do is here with men, or in men, with breaking their own hearts, and forſaking their ſins! And whither do they run? they run to their inherent righteouſneſs, their qualifications, their prayers, their tears, their humiliations, ſorrows, reformations, univerſal obedience, and the like; but is this to run to free grace and free mercy in Chriſt? nay, Chriſt, alas, is never thought of; he is clean forgotten, and wholly neglected, and not conſidered all this while. Here is ploughing with a wooden plough; here is a working upon a dead horſe, or rather with one; what is in the heart of a man to plough up the rock of his own heart? No marvel, that you ſweat and toil and moil all the day long, and all lies in the ſame caſe it did: there is no ſtrength to bring forth; becauſe you go in your own, or the ſtrength of the creature, and not in the ſtrength of the Lord Jeſus.

You know when a pump is dry, men uſe not to ſtand labouring at it till they ſweat; but they firſt come, and fetch a bucket of water, and pour the water into it, and then they fall to pumping, and by virtue of the water poured in, there comes more water up, and by continual pumping they fetch out abundance: ſo your hearts are dry things, there is no ſap, no moiſture, no life in them;

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them; Christ must first be poured in, before you can get any thing out; wherefore then stand you labouring and tugging in vain? Oh, stay no longer, go to Christ; it is he that must break thy rocky heart, before the plough can come over it, or at least enter into it. As I told you before, so I tell you again, you must consider Christ as freely given unto you by the Father, even before you can believe.

There is a story of *Ebedmelech* the black-moor in *Jeremy*, who by his interest and favour with the king, got leave to go to the dungeon to *Jeremiah* to fetch him out; he carries ropes with him, lets them down, and causeth *Jeremiah* to put them under his arms, and round about him; now *Jeremiah* by holding fast the ropes, doth not pull him into the pit, but he pulls *Jeremiah* out of the pit to himself. I speak this by way of illustration: Christ is our *Ebedmelech* with the Father, the great King of Glory; his dealing prevails that he may have liberty to pluck us poor *Jeremies* out of the pit and dungeon of sin and satan, of misery and destruction. How doth he this? He doth not first send ropes, and then come after, but goes and carries them with him; that is, Christ doth not send faith first to believers, and then comes after as drawn by it; no, but he comes and brings it with him, and he, being present, lets it down to them; and when they have it, they do not draw Christ down to them by it, but holding it fast, he draws them up to himself. So here is not faith first, and then Christ; but Christ comes first

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firſt and gives faith to apprehend and lay hold upon him: conſider therefore Chriſt as your *Ebed-melech*, who comes and reacheth himſelf out to draw you up, and being firſt preſent reacheth out faith to you, by which you may hold; ſo Chriſt fetcheth you out of the pit.

Wherefore (to draw to a concluſion) remember this, as you run to Chriſt, ſo ſhall you proſper in every thing you take in hand; all the buſineſs that Chriſt undertakes ſhall go on a-main, whilſt that the creature undertakes ſhall ſtand at a ſtop: make trial, begin but with Chriſt; take him along with you in your entrance upon any thing, and you have a mighty counſellor to guide and direct you, for ſo Chriſt is called; and good counſel you know is very uſeful for a proſperous expedition of things. Again, you have a tower and refuge fully ſecure to retreat to, in caſe of extremity, or of over-maſterſhip. It uſeth to be a prime piece of policy, being to combat with an enemy, to make ſure of ſome good fort, and to maintain that; ſo that if the enemy be too ſtrong, they may know whither to go to be hid and ſaved from the preſent danger; and without ſuch a refuge they are all liable to be cut off: ſo do you begin with Chriſt; make ſure of him when you enter into the field of the world; get but this fort, and you have a place of retreat upon all occaſions; where there is moſt certain ſecurity, which the gates of hell ſhall not be able to prevail againſt; for Chriſt is that impregnable rock; but this is not all.

Chriſt

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Chriſt is alſo *aqua vitæ*, water of life: take but Chriſt along with you, and then in all your travels no ſooner do you begin to faint, but there is *aqua vitæ* at hand; you may drink of it, and your ſpirits ſhall be refreſhed and revived. What ſhall I ſay more to you? It is Chriſt that oils the wheels of your chariots, and makes you run the ways of God's commandments; it is he that fills the ſails; you muſt needs lie at a calm, if he be not preſent to blow in them; take Chriſt with you, and you have the wind at command. Many a mariner would give the world to have ſuch a privilege, as to command the natural winds, and to make them blow when, and which way he liſteth; he would never then lie wind-bound: beloved, you that have Chriſt, have the wind in your fiſts, you may be carried to any port you will; if you have him, you ſhall have a ſwift gale, and ſhall ſail a-main by his power.

Therefore, if Chriſt be poured forth, and a gift unto men, and ſo cheap that you may have him for nothing, only receiving him; let this be your everlaſting cry and ſong, none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt; or rather in the language of the apoſtle, *I deſire to know nothing but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

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SERMON VIII.

Chriſtian Liberty no Licentious Doctrine.

JOHN viii. 36.

If the Son therefore ſhall make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed.

OUR Saviour here gives a hint to his apoſtles, that they ſhould not look to fare better than their maſter; he ſpeaks of hard uſage in the world; for he came into it to fulfil a gracious and glorious miniſtry; bringing from the boſom of his Father, the great and unſearchable love the Father had from everlaſting in his thoughts towards his own dear ones; and ſo he takes all opportunities and advantages to publiſh the glad tidings of ſalvation to the ſons of men; yet met he with much oppoſition. But although Chriſt knew full well, that there were many cavillers laid ſnares to trap him in his words, and that they frequented the common aſſemblies where he preached, to catch ſomething

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ſomething from him, whereby they might have a colour at leaſt to upbraid him, and bring him into danger; I ſay, although Chriſt knew there were in all ſuch aſſemblies ſome Scribes and Phariſees, and ſuch like; yet for all this, when opportunity offered, he was graciouſly pleaſed to uſe much freedom of ſpeech to them: and though ſome were carping and cavilling at his words and his perſon, yet ſome there were to whom the glad tidings of ſalvation did belong, who by his miniſtry received them, and ſo were comforted. It ſeems it fell out thus with Chriſt, in the two former chapters, and this out of which I have taken my text; for in theſe he was graciouſly pleaſed to hold forth the light of the glad tidings of ſalvation; wherein he uſed, as I ſaid before, much freedom and boldneſs of ſpeech; which occaſioned the adverſaries of the goſpel to vent their poiſon, and ſpit the venom of their malice againſt him; he could no ſooner ſpeak a word of grace, but preſently they were upon the back of him.

Theſe three chapters contain in them nothing elſe but a continued diſpute between Chriſt and his enemies, intermingled with moſt admirable, ſweet, and gracious expreſſions of him to his own people. In verſe 30, after a large diſpute and diſcourſe, the Holy Ghoſt is pleaſed to tell us, That *many did believe in Chriſt* upon the words that he had ſpoken; here you ſee a gracious effect upon ſome, that Chriſt knew before hand; upon which he took encouragement, notwithſtanding all the adverſaries' oppoſition, to be bold in ſpeaking:

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and perceiving that his goſpel took effect upon ſome, nay, many of the people, he turns his diſcourſe from theſe carpers, with whom he had ſo long diſputed before, and begins to frame his ſpeech to the capacity and condition of the new converts and believers; therefore in verſe 31, 32, our Saviour delivers himſelf to them in this manner; *If you continue in my words*, ſaith he, *then are you my diſciples, and the truth ſhall make you free.*

Now, although it be apparent, that Chriſt directs this ſpeech of his to the new believers, yet in verſe 37, the cavillers carp and cavil, whether wittingly or ignorantly I cannot ſay; they muſt needs have Chriſt to ſpeak this paſſage unto them; and they preſently in a hot and captious way reply to him; whereas he had ſaid, *They ſhould be free, and the truth ſhould make them free;* that is, as many as did believe; they preſently retorted upon him, why? *We are* Abraham's *ſeed, we were never in bondage;* how can we be made free? They might have held their tongues, Chriſt never meant them, he never ſpake to them: and though they ſaid, *They were never in bondage;* in bondage they were, and in bondage like to be. However, Chriſt did not ſpeak to them, but to believers; yet they will not leave him ſo, they will have a fling at him; therefore he anſwers their objection again. In the 33d verſe, they made uſe of this argument to aſſert their freedom; ſaid they, *We are* Abraham's *ſeed, we were never in bondage.* What, doth he talk of making us free? He takes off

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off this recoil with a two-edged ſword; there is a double anſwer to the argument they make uſe of. *Firſt*, therefore, Chriſt ſhews what the liberty is, and wherein it ſtands, he ſpeaks of; *Secondly*, he ſhews that their plea is not good; for their being *Abraham*'s ſeed was not a plea ſufficient for their freedom.

Firſt, Chriſt ſhews what true freedom is, that he thus ſpeaks of; it is namely this, *abiding in the houſe for ever.*

Secondly, He ſhews that to be *Abraham*'s ſeed, is not enough to make them free; for the anſwer of Chriſt is thus, *He that committeth ſin*, (ſaith he) *is the ſervant of ſin: now the ſervant abideth not in the houſe always, but the ſon abideth in the houſe for ever:* as much as to ſay, Suppoſe you are *Abraham*'s ſeed, yet if you commit ſin, for all this you are ſervants, you are in bondage to ſin; and, as long as you are, you have no liberty. All freedom conſiſts in this eſpecially, that Chriſt ſpeaks of, that to the *free indeed*, there will be *abiding in the houſe for ever.* The apoſtle, *Gal.* iv. 22, 23, illuſtrates to us the nature of this freedom (that Chriſt ſpeaks of) in this place, and, indeed, ſets forth the ſubſtance of it; *Do you not hear the law? You that deſire to be under the law, what ſaith it?* The law ſpeaks thus, (ſaith he) *Abraham* had two children, the one according to the promiſe, the other of the bond-woman, theſe are a myſtery; *Agar* ſignifies *Mount-Sinai* in *Arabia*, which genders unto bondage. Now *Agar* was the mother of *Iſhmael*; but the ſeed of the promiſe

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promiſe is from above. The concluſion is this, ſaith the apoſtle, *Caſt out the bond-woman and her ſon, for the ſon of the bond-woman ſhall not inherit with the ſon of the free-woman;* but he that is free, is in the inheritance for ever: the bond-woman, and her ſon, muſt not abide in the houſe for ever, they muſt be caſt out. Chriſt alludes to this, of *Abraham*'s caſting out of *Iſhmael;* as much as to ſay, There may be thoſe of the ſeed of *Abraham*, as *Iſhmael* was, yet be caſt out, being not the ſeed of the promiſe; they may be the ſeed of *Abraham*, but being the ſervants of ſin, there is no abiding for them.

Now our Saviour having repelled and anſwered their arguments, he comes, in the words of my text, to ſhew the riſe and fountain from whence this freedom, he ſpeaks of, ſprings, or takes its firſt beginning; *If the Son therefore make you free, then are you free indeed.*

The words I have read to you, are an hypothetical propoſition, or a concluſion ſtated upon a ſuppoſition, and contain in them theſe particulars. *Firſt*, The grace itſelf held out, and that is freedom. *If the Son make you free. Secondly*, The original, or the cauſe of it; that is, the Son's making them ſo, *If the Son make you free. Thirdly*, The quality of it, what kind of freedom it is; it is not a ſhadowy, or empty, uſeleſs freedom, but a ſubſtantial one, *Then are you free indeed.*

This hypothetical propoſition reduced into a categorical concluſion, is no more but this, *They that the Son makes free, are free indeed.*

Only

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Only there is one thing obſervable from the argument of Chriſt in this place, that will add a word to this propoſition. Theſe *Jews*, that did diſpute with Chriſt, they pretended that there was no way to full freedom, but by being born of *Abraham*; ſo their being the ſeed of *Abraham*, gives them a complete freedom: now Chriſt takes them upon advantage; he will ſuppoſe with them in their ſenſe, that if freedom were to be had by any outward privilege, it ſhould be, by being *Abraham*'s ſeed; if, therefore, *Abraham*'s freedom be no freedom, as indeed it is not, then there can be none, but by one that is above *Abraham*. Now, ſaith Chriſt, the Son ſhall make you free; as much as to ſay, *Abraham*, the freeſt perſon in the world, cannot make you free, much leſs can any other, but the Son. So then, the propoſition is this, That they alone are indeed free, who have their freedom from the Son of God; I ſay, they alone are free indeed, who are made free only by Chriſt; none in the world, nothing in the world can make free, but the Son of God.

Now, that we may ſuck, and be ſatisfied, at the breaſts of conſolation, (for there is the ſincere milk of the word in it) let us take briefly, into our conſideration, theſe few particulars.

Firſt, What the freedom is, whereof Chriſt ſpeaks in this place.

Secondly, How Chriſt makes free.

And if time ſhall ſerve, *Thirdly*, Who they are, that are thus made free by Chriſt.

I will begin with the *firſt*, What this freedom is,

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is, whereof Chriſt ſpeaks in this place. For clearing whereof, note, *firſt*, That freedom and liberty are terms of one and the ſame ſignification. It is all one to ſay, The Son makes free, or the Son gives liberty. Both the *Greek* word ελευθεροι, and the *Latin* word *liberi*, are promiſcuouſly tranſlated, either free, or men at liberty. It is true, I confeſs, this word *liberty*, hath gotten an ill name in the world, partly through the abuſe of liberty, and partly through the malignity of ſome ſpirits, that ſtrike even at the heart of Chriſt, through the ſides of thoſe that are Chriſt's; laying reproachful, ignominious, and ſhameful names, upon them of libertiniſm. Now, becauſe liberty and freedom are thus brought into reproach and diſgrace, the true freedom, which Chriſt hath purchaſed and given, requires ſome clearing, leaſt it periſh and be loſt in the rubbiſh of corrupt liberty; and ſo the people of God be jeered out of that which is their greateſt portion.

I am aſhamed to ſpeak it, I would there were not occaſion, that which is the very life and the ſole comfort of the members of Chriſt Jeſus, becomes ſuch a reproach, through the malignity of the enemies of the goſpel of Chriſt, that the very believers themſelves are almoſt aſhamed to go under the name of that that is their greateſt glory. To be called a libertine, is the moſt glorious title under heaven; take it for one that is truly free by Chriſt. To be made free by Chriſt, in proper conſtruction, is no other but this, to be made a libertine by Chriſt; I do not ſay, to be made a

libertine

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libertine in the corrupt ſenſe of it, but to be one in the true and proper ſenſe of it. It is true indeed, Chriſt doth not give liberty unto licentiouſneſs of life and converſation; of which we ſhall ſpeak more by and by; but a real and true liberty, Chriſt hath purchaſed, and given to all his members.

That we may the better underſtand therefore what this freedom is, that Chriſt hath purchaſed, and beſtows upon believers; and, thereby, ſave it from the reproach of corrupt and licentious liberty; underſtand, beloved, that there is a threefold liberty. *Firſt*, Moral or civil. *Secondly*, Senſual and corrupt. *Thirdly*, Spiritual and divine.

Firſt, Moral and civil liberty is that which theſe *Jews* ſpeak of, (miſ-interpreting the ſenſe of Chriſt) ſuch as you uſe to have in your cities; when a man hath ſerved out his time, he is a freeman, he hath the freedom of the city, he hath liberty to trade in it: ſo *Paul* underſtood liberty, when he ſpake with the centurion; the centurion ſaid he bought it with a great deal of money; but, ſaith *Paul*, I was ſo born; I was born a *Roman*. But of this liberty Chriſt ſpeaks not here.

Secondly, There is a corrupt liberty; that the apoſtle ſpeaks of in *Gal.* v. 13. He tells us thus, *That we are called unto liberty*; but, ſaith he, *uſe not liberty as an occaſion to the fleſh.* A licentious liberty is nothing elſe but this, namely, when men turn the grace of God into wantonneſs, and abuſing the goſpel of Chriſt, continue in ſin, that grace might abound. Unto which the apoſtle affixes

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affixes an abhorrency; God forbid, ſaith he, any man ſhould make uſe of ſuch a liberty as this. I am confident of it, and affirm boldly, there is not one man made free by Chriſt, that makes it his rule, namely, to be bold to commit ſin with greedineſs, becauſe of the redemption that is in the blood of Chriſt; but that Chriſt who hath redeemed from ſin and wrath, hath alſo redeemed from a vain converſation; and there ſhall not be a making uſe of the grace of God, as emboldening, and encouraging, to break out into licentiouſneſs. All that have this freedom purchaſed by Chriſt for them, have alſo the power of God in them, which keeps them that they break not out licentiouſly; the ſeed of God abides in them, that they cannot ſin, as in the 1 *John* iii. 9. that is, they cannot ſin after this faſhion.*

Thirdly, There is a ſpiritual liberty; for of corrupt licentiouſneſs Chriſt ſpeaks not in the text neither; but of a ſpiritual freedom: and that it may be clear, he ſpeaks of a ſpiritual freedom here, you may plainly perceive by the words going before; for whereas theſe Phariſees affirmed they were not in bondage; Chriſt proves they were, thus: *They were the ſervants of ſin*, ſaith he, *and he that is the ſervant of ſin, abides not in the houſe for ever;* as much as to ſay, the bondage here, was ſuch, as conſiſted in being under ſin; ſo then, Chriſt here means a bondage and ſlavery

* This paragraph, as well as a multitude of others, ſhew that the Doctor was no friend to licentiouſneſs, and what a madneſs it is to charge ſo worthy a perſon with holding licentious principles.

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under ſin; the freedom, therefore, oppoſite to this, muſt needs be a ſpiritual freedom.

Now it will be worth our while to enquire, *firſt*, into the nature; and, *ſecondly*, into the quality of this ſpiritual freedom, that Chriſt brings with him to his own people.

Firſt, For the nature of this freedom. The philoſophers have a rule, that is of very good uſe, for clearing of divine truths; "Contraries illuſtrate "each other." Freedom will be moſt clearly, or at leaſt more clearly apparent unto us, by conſidering the contrary to freedom. The contrary to freedom is bondage; if we know what the bondage is that Chriſt ſpeaks of, we ſhall better know what the freedom is.

We will awhile conſider what bondage Chriſt ſpeaks of here, to which he oppoſeth freedom, as I ſaid before.

The bondage he ſpeaks of, is a bondage under ſin. Let us briefly conſider whas this is. This ſtands in theſe two things.

Firſt, An obligation unto, and under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of its tranſgreſſion.

And, *ſecondly*, In the privation of all comfort and contentment, by reaſon of the ſame tranſgreſſion.

Firſt, I ſay, an obligation unto, and under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of tranſgreſſing it, that is the firſt part of bondage under ſin. A perſon is then properly and truly under bondage, when by reaſon of his tranſgreſſion, he can make no eſcape from under the curſe of the law, but muſt

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muſt lie down to it, and be under the torment of it, as a bond-ſlave, even as a ſlave in the *Turks* gallies; though this man in his ſlavery, works ever ſo hard; (for of that he ſhall not want, work enough he ſhall have) yet, if at any time he ſhall chance to ſlip or fall, whether it be through omiſſion, or through mere infirmity and weakneſs, and want of ſtrength; all his hard labour is nothing at all conſidered; but, when he fails in that inſupportable bondage and taſk, he hath his ſtripes and blows.

This, I ſay, is the true ſtate of bondage, when there is cruelty and rigour, without any regard to the impoſſibility to go under the taſk; the load and blows are laid on with weight; no crying, no promiſes, no excuſes, no pleas, though ever ſo reaſonable, can be heard; but, as there is a fault committed, there muſt be ſtripes inflicted. So it is with a perſon in ſpiritual bondage; a man is then under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of his tranſgreſſion, when doing what he can, (ſuppoſe as it ſhould be) yet, if he fail but in one thing, that which he doth, is not regarded nor conſidered; neither is his ability to do no more, taken notice of; but, ſtill as he ſlips, ſo the law lays on ſtripes.

There are two things, mainly to be conſidered, that do mightily embitter the condition of a bondman, who is under the curſe of the law, becauſe of his tranſgreſſion.

The *firſt* is this, The threatenings and menacings of the curſe, inceſſantly following one upon the neck

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neck of another, with loud out-cries of bitterneſs againſt this ſoul tranſgreſſing. It is with a perſon in bondage to ſin, under the curſe of the law for it, as it was with *Job* in reſpect of the afflictions that were upon him: one comes and brings him word his oxen were taken away; he had no ſooner done but another comes and tells him his ſheep were loſt; and, no ſooner had he delivered his meſſage, but another comes and tells him his camels were ſtolen; and no ſooner had he done, but one comes and tells him his ſons and daughters were ſlain; ſo one after another the meſſengers came thick upon him. It is juſt ſo with perſons in bondage under the law; it comes and threatens this curſe; then it comes and threatens a ſecond; and, no ſooner is that ended, but it comes and threatens a third, crying out continually, Curſed, curſed, curſed, curſed. If the ears of the people were open to hear as much as the law ſpeaks, they would hear nothing elſe but a peal of curſes belonging to him that is under it. As for inſtance, a man under the bondage of the law for ſin, can hear nothing but this, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* Beloved, there is no man, but in ſome reſpect or other, every act that he doth, hath ſome infirmity and failing in it; and, in that regard, the law ſpeaks, *Curſed art thou, for thou haſt not continued in all things that are written in the law to do them.* Thou canſt no ſooner paſs from this act to another, but as ſoon as thou doſt perform that ſecond act, for the failings in it, the law

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law cries, Curſed again; *Curſed art thou, for thou haſt not continued in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* As look into *Rom.* ii. there is a continued pealing out the law to thoſe that are in bondage under it; *Tribulation and anguiſh, and wrath, to every ſoul that doth evil;* ſaving, that in *Rom.* iii. 19. the apoſtle tells us, this curſedneſs, this tribulation, and anguiſh, is pronounced by the law only upon them that are under it; ſo then, it is queſtionleſs, that to them that are under it, tribulation, and anguiſh, and wrath, and vengeance, do belong.

Now it is a kind of death, a very torment to be under ſuch continual menaces; to hear nothing but execrations; to hear nothing but curſes and bitterneſs, nothing but indignation and wrath; Oh! what a hell is it upon earth, for a ſoul to receive this ſentence! What a bitterneſs is it for a malefactor, that ſtands at the tribunal, to hear a judge, it may be, making a ſpeech of two hours long to him, only reciting the extremity of the torment he ſhall endure, for the crimes he hath committed! Every repetition or addition of torment, denounced and ſentenced, is a kind of fiery dart, ſtriking freſh and freſh, to the wounding of the heart. Whoever they are that are under the curſe of the law, by reaſon of ſin, there is no voice ſpeaks, or can be heard, by them, for the loudneſs of that voice, Curſed, curſed, curſed, every moment, every hour; nothing in the world but curſed.

Beloved, let me tell you, this concerns not only perſons

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perſons that live in all manner of licentiouſneſs, as drunkenneſs, whoredom, the profanation of the ſabbath in the groſſeſt meaſure; but, that I may ſpeak plainly, this extends in a parallel line with them, to the exacteſt, ſtricteſt, preciſeſt perſon in their converſation, though the world is not able to ſay (as men uſe to ſay) to them, black is thine eye; nay, though thou ſeem to be ſpiritual in all thy performances; nay, and largely too, yet if thou be under the law, in thy tranſgreſſion, thou ſhalt hear from it, as many curſes pronounced againſt thee, as all the profane wretches under heaven; the greatneſs of thy honeſty and uprightneſs, whether in religion, or in matters of commerce and dealings with men, thy honeſt converſation, I ſay, hath the loud peals of curſes ſounding in thy ears. Suppoſe thou art a man diligently attending the gates of the houſe of God, given much to prayer, faſting, mourning, and weeping; yea, to great liberality, giveſt all thy goods to the poor, *&c.* Yet, I ſay, for all this thou mayeſt be under the curſe of the law; that will pick a quarrel in the beſt of theſe performances; it will ſay, thus and thus, in this and that thou haſt *not continued in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them;* concerning this, thou art under the curſe of it as well as another.

Secondly, There are not only menacings and threatenings as a fearful knell in thine ears from the law, while thou art in bondage under it; but alſo there is no more with it than a word and a blow. The Lord doth not deal with men in this caſe,

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caſe, as he deals with his own people, holding his rod before them to give them warning for an eſcape; but preſently upon the tranſgreſſion, the threatening is put in execution ſpeedily without mercy, laying on the back of the tranſgreſſor, terrifying and racking the ſoul! Oh the ſoul that is awakened, that hears the menaces, and feels the ſcourges of the law! Oh, what torments and anguiſh, what tribulation and bitterneſs muſt continually affright it! This, I ſay, is the commiſſion of the law, to ſpare neither high nor low, rich or poor; nay, I will go further, holy or unholy, in reſpect of the practice of holineſs, can exempt himſelf from the curſe of it. It is true, as the apoſtle ſaith, the law ſpeaks life; *Do this and live;* but poor comfort is it, becauſe it firſt requires ſuch doings that are impoſſible to be attained; juſt as if a man ſhould be condemned to die at a bar, with this promiſe; Take all *England*, and remove it, upon thy ſhoulders, into the *Weſt-Indies*, and then thou ſhalt be ſaved from this death.* The judge had as good

* Mr. *Anthony Burgeſs*, in his *Vindiciæ Legis*, p. 14. repreſents this paſſage as a decrying of the law; but what decrying of the law is this, to obſerve the true nature and language of it, requiring that which it is impoſſible for fallen man to do: he himſelf inſtances in the goſpel, by way of reply, bidding a man believe a thing impoſſible to man's power, he obſerves; and is not this as much a decrying of the goſpel? Indeed, there is this difference, the goſpel not only encourages to believe, but it is often accompanied with the power of God enabling men to believe, whereas the law is never attended with ſuch power as to enable men to fulfil it; but this he ſays is extraneous to the matter in hand; but wherein it is ſo, is not ſaid. See *Lancaſter's Vindication of the Goſpel*, &c. p. 215.

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ſay nothing, for the thing is impoſſible to be done. The law indeed ſays, *Do this and live;* but where is the man that can do it, by continuing in all things without failing in one tittle thereof? He that continueth in the whole law, and fails but in one point, is guilty of all; therefore, till you come to that perfection of fulfilling it, that you fail not in one tittle, never dream of the life that it holdeth out to you; if you have failed in one point, all you have done is ravelled out unto the end again; all your labour is loſt; you are as much under* the curſe as if you had done nothing at all.

Yet further, beloved, the bondage under the law not only ſtands in the curſings of it, and in the preſence of all evil thereby; but alſo in the privation of all comfort, that men might have under this torment: I ſay, a privation of all comfort; for there is not a word, not a tittle of comfort for the refreſhment of a perſon under the law, not a tittle of comfort in all the law, from firſt to laſt: it is true, there was comfort intermingled in the promulgation of it, but the comfort is not from that properly ſo conſidered. As it contains in it a curſe to the diſobedient, there is no comfort to any man that is under it, in reſpect of the curſe of it; I ſay, the law is to ſuch perſons (as *Micajah* was to *Ahab*) never ſpeaking a word of good to them. But this is not all, for though the law be never ſo rigid of itſelf, if it would allow and ſuffer others to ſpeak a word of comfort, there

[* Rom. iii. 19.]

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were ſome good thing in it; but it keeps under, and ſhuts up, that there cannot be a word of comfort heard from any other, *Gal.* iii. 23. There you ſhall find that the law is not only a terror of itſelf to thoſe that are under it, but it is a moſt rigid, ſevere keeper, that there cannot come in the leaſt glimmerings of light, and comfort elſewhere; for (ſaith the apoſtle there, of perſons being under the law) they are ſhut up unto, or until the faith; for he calls the law a ſchool-maſter until Chriſt; ſo that Chriſt himſelf hath not a word of comfort for them while they are under the law:* when Chriſt ſpeaks any thing, preſently ſaith the law, this is not to you; this is for others that are exempted from my government, from my dominion; there is nothing of all this for you, you have nothing to do with it. I ſay, this is the condition of men that are kept under this bitterneſs of the law, that as they tranſgreſs, the curſe of it is their priſon: perſon kept in this eſtate, how

* Mr. *Burgeſs* in his *Vindiciæ Legis*, p. 14, cavils at this paſſage; he obſerves, that by the law, in *Gal.* iii. 23. is meant the ſcripture in general; which, if ſo, is true of the law in particular; though not the whole ſcripture, but the law-part of it muſt certainly be intended, ſince part of the ſcripture, at leaſt, is written for comfort: he urges, that the apoſtle is ſpeaking of the form of *Moſes*'s regimen, and of the fathers having no comfort by that means; be it ſo, the ſame holds good of all other perſons that are under the ſame ſpirit of bondage to the law: he ſuggeſts, that the Doctor in repreſenting the law as ſuch a rigid keeper, that it will let none ſpeak comfort to a man, excludes a mediator; it is certain that it does not direct to any, and whilſt the ſoul is under the power of it, it will not ſuffer it to receive any comfort from Chriſt the mediator, or from his goſpel, until this breaks in through the power of divine grace upon him, and delivers him from the bondage of the law. See *Lancaſter. ut ſupra*, p. 216, &c.

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do they put off the comforts of Chriſt from them? There is none of them belongs to me, ſaith ſuch a ſoul; I have ſinned, and all the judgments of Chriſt are pronounced againſt me, I muſt die. So long as you continue in this eſtate, the curſes of the law are as frequently pronounced againſt you, as there are tranſgreſſions in you; there will not be one comfort of Jeſus Chriſt to give refreſhment to your ſpirits; but ſo long as you ſtill remain in this eſtate, that you will conclude you are under the curſe, becauſe of your tranſgreſſions, you will forſake all the mercies of the goſpel. This is then to be in bondage under the law; namely, for a man ſo to have it tyrannize and domineer over him, as to make him believe that as often as he tranſgreſſes, he muſt expect the ſentence of the curſe of it to be fulfilled upon him.

Thirdly, They that are in bondage under the law becauſe of ſin, as they are ſubject to this miſery, in reſpect of the privation of comfort; ſo the law, it is true, aſks work enough, more than any man under heaven can now perform; but will provide nothing in the world, wherewith to have things done; it requires the full tale of brick, but it gives no ſtraw; it puts into no way where help may be had; it ſuffers no help to come in. Let me tell you, you that are under the curſe of the law, that is, have ſtill the law telling you that as you do fail, ſo you muſt have the curſe; you ſhall find that when you do the will of God, it will exact the whole, the utmoſt tale of brick of you, and will give no help at all, though never ſo weak,

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and unable: get it as you can, do what you will, when the day is done, the law requires, that there be not a brick ſhort: if you fail the leaſt that can be in it, it is no matter, able or not able, you muſt have the laſh, as well as thoſe that have the greateſt abilities in the world. It is a hard condition; I have opened it the more largely, that you may the better ſee the glory and happineſs of that freedom Chriſt hath purchaſed for his people.

I will in a word give you a touch, who the perſons are that are in this bondage; and then I will come to ſet forth the freedom itſelf; and, I hope, it will not be tedious to hear of the freedom, when you have heard of the extreme bitterneſs of this bondage.

Who are under this bondage?

I anſwer, as I ſaid before, Whoever you are, that will apply ſtill to yourſelves, the ſentence and curſe of the law, becauſe of tranſgreſſion; you that will be ſtill arguing and pleading, if I tranſgreſs it is but juſtice, and I muſt expect to feel the ſmart of the rod; I ſay, you that will ſtill maintain and eſtabliſh the curſe, as a neceſſary attendant upon tranſgreſſion and diſobedience, and take this to be your condition and your portion, you are the men that are under the law, that are under the curſe of it. I know, although you may think to wind yourſelves out of the extremity of the curſe, or from the rod of the law, by your ſtrictneſs and exactneſs, and grow up to perfection in your obedience; yet all your perfection of obedience ſhall not be able to except you from

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from the laſh, till you have attained to ſuch, that hath not one jot or tittle of failing or deviation at all; for if you fail in one tittle you are gone for ever; for the law, as it attends great faults, ſo it attends little failings too; and if you give it power over you, when you commit great ſins, it will take power to itſelf, to whip, to curſe you for ſmall ſins too.

I will come to diſcover what the freedom is, from the bondage Chriſt ſpeaks of here; I ſay, this freedom is from all this bondage under ſin and the law. *Firſt*, Chriſt exempts men and diſcharges them, and acquits them from all the menaces, and threatenings, and all the bitter language that the law pronounces againſt the tranſgreſſors of it. Mark well what I ſay, Every perſon made free by Chriſt, is freed and exempted, that the law cannot, muſt not pronounce one curſe againſt him: there is not one of all the curſes in it, that belongs to ſuch a man that is made free by Chriſt. This ſeems ſtrange, that the law ſhould not dare to pronounce the curſe, where ſin is committed; but not ſo ſtrange as true; the freemen of Chriſt, when they tranſgreſs the law, as in all things they ſin, yet when they ſin, there is no curſe, no menaces, no threatenings of the law to be executed upon them: ſhould I come to inſtance, peradventure I ſhould give offence to ſome; I would not willingly give offence to any; but the truth, as it is in Jeſus, muſt not be concealed for fear of the anger of thoſe that are enemies unto Chriſt: let me therefore tell you, ſuppoſe a member

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member of Chriſt, a free-man of his ſhould happen to fall, not only by a failing or a ſlip; but alſo by a groſs failing, a heavy failing; nay, a ſcandalous falling into ſin;* Chriſt making a perſon free, diſannuls, fruſtrates, and makes void every curſe † and ſentence that is in the law, that is againſt ſuch a tranſgreſſor; that this member of Chriſt is no more under the curſe when he hath tranſgreſſed,‡ than he was before he tranſgreſſed. Thus I ſay, Chriſt hath conveyed him beyond the reach of the curſe; it concerns him no more than if he had not tranſgreſſed. For the illuſtration of this, I beſeech you to conſider this one thing, it is familiar to you, and the caſe is the ſame with Chriſt's free-men; ſuppoſe there are two men, equally guilty of felony and murder, both of them come to their arraignment; one of them hath his diſcharge or pardon from the king, having received ſatisfaction in his behalf; the other hath received no diſcharge at all. The judge goes on to pronounce the ſentence according to the law;

* Through ignorance, weakneſs of the fleſh, and the power of Satan's temptations.

[† Gal. iii. 13.]

‡ Sin often ſeparates between God and his own people, with reſpect to communion, but never with reſpect to union to him or intereſt in him; for he knew what they would be when he ſet his love upon them; his love broke through all the corruptions of nature and ſins of life in their converſion; and appears to continue the ſame from the ſtrong expreſſions of his grace to them, notwithſtanding all their backſlidings. Now this does not ſuppoſe that God loves ſin, nor does it give any encouragement to it; for though it cannot ſeparate from intereſt in God, yet it often does from the enjoyment of him.

thou

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thou ſhalt go from hence to the place from whence thou cameſt, and from thence to the place of execution there to be hanged: now mark, theſe are two men equal in tranſgreſſion; and therefore in themſelves equally deſerving the ſame ſentence of execution; when the judge pronounces the juſtice of the law upon the one tranſgreſſor, he hath not his diſcharge, he lies under the ſentence; but the other hath his diſcharge,* and therefore the judge ſpeaks not a word of this ſentence to him; I ſay again, the judge dares not ſpeak a word of this ſort to him; and when the man that is pardoned hears the ſentence, he may hear it as the doom of his fellow; but he hears nothing of it concerning himſelf; ſo it is with the free-man of Chriſt, he may fall into the ſame ſin that a reprobate falls into, (as *Noah* was once drunk, *David* did once commit adultery and murder) but as this man is the free-man of Chriſt, the curſe cannot attack him; though the law ſay to the reprobate, that hath not freedom by Chriſt, thou ſhalt certainly be damned for this; yet the law cannot ſay one word of this to him that is a free-man, though he commit the ſame fault, and be guilty of the ſame puniſhment; and the ground of all this is, that Chriſt hath made him free† from it. Therefore, let me tell you in a word; if you be free-men of Chriſt, you may eſteem all the curſes of the law, as no more concerning you, than the laws of *Eng-*

[* John viii. 36. Rom. viii. 1. and x. 4.]

[† Rom. viii. 2.]

land

land concern *Spain*, or the laws of *Turky* an *Engliſhman*, with whom they have nothing to do.* I do not ſay the law is abſolutely aboliſhed, but it is aboliſhed in reſpect of the curſe of it, to every perſon that is a free-man of Chriſt; ſo though ſuch a man ſin, the law hath no more to ſay to him than if he had not ſinned. Beloved, Chriſt is a ſanctuary, he is a privileged place to every one of his free-men; the law is not able to ſerve, or rather it is diſabled from ſerving a writ *ad capiendum*, upon the perſon that is walking in Chriſt, and keeps himſelf within thoſe bounds; *He that continues in my word is my diſciple, and the truth ſhall make him free.* If you abide in Chriſt, and keep in Chriſt, no ſerjeant of the law dares come in to ſerve a writ; no accuſation of the law can come in againſt you. Look what the apoſtle triumphing ſaith, *Rom.* viii. 33, 34, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemn? it is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again.* Mark well I pray you, *Paul* doth not ſay, that the elect never

* This paſſage is moſt groſsly miſrepreſented by Mr. *Burgeſs*, in his *Vindiciæ Legis*, p. 13. who quotes it thus, "A man, under "grace, hath no more to do with the law, than an *Engliſhman* "hath with the laws of *Spain* and *Turky*:" whereas the Doctor's words and ſenſe are, that Chriſt's free-men ſhould eſteem the curſes of the law, (not the law itſelf) as no more concerning them, than the laws of *England* concern *Spain*, or thoſe of *Turky* an *Engliſhman*; and to prevent any miſtake, leſt it ſhould be thought that they have nothing to do with the law in any ſenſe, being freed from the curſes of it, he adds the words that follow, which moſt clearly ſhew, that he meant not an abolition of the law in all reſpects, but in reſpect of the curſe of it, and that to Chriſt's freemen only.

tranſgreſs;

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tranſgreſs; he confeſſes that there is tranſgreſſion; but that which he triumphs in is, that though they tranſgreſs, there is nothing to be laid to their charge; no curſe can come againſt them, nor be executed upon them; there is no clapping them in gaol for their tranſgreſſion.

Secondly, The free-man of Chriſt, as he is exempted from the curſe and rod of the law, that is become as a muzzle-chapt dog, he may paſs and repaſs without the leaſt ſnap, without the leaſt bite of it; yea, though he fall,* yet it cannot come at him, to hurt him: ſo, in the ſecond place, the free-man of Chriſt is let looſe to enjoy the free Spirit, as *David* calls it, in *Pſalm* li. or the comforting Spirit, as Chriſt calls it, in *John* xiv. 26. I ſay, this freedom conſiſts in this, to have free ſociety, and free diſcourſe, with the free Spirit of God; ſo that the free-man of Chriſt may hear all the gracious language provided in the rich thoughts of God for him; he may hear, and that with application to himſelf, that his iniquities are blotted out as a cloud; that God will remember his ſins no more; that they are caſt into the bottom of the ſea; they are laid all upon Chriſt; that the Lamb of God took them all away: that the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth him from all ſins. It is a marvelous freedom indeed, to have this participation of communion with this free Spirit of Chriſt, to hear ſuch comfortable language, to raiſe up a drooping ſpirit, to ſatisfy a languiſhing ſoul.

[* Micah vii. 8.]

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, The free-man of Chriſt hath this free-dom, that Chriſt doth all his work for him, as well as in him. He that is in bondage under the law, as I told you before, muſt do every thing himſelf, and that he doth, he muſt do perfectly; that is an inſupportable thing, and heavy bondage, for a man to have more laid upon him than his ſtrength is able to bear; the free-man of Chriſt, conſidering that he is weak, poor, and unable to work, Chriſt doth all his work for him. In *Iſa.* xxvi. 12. the Holy Ghoſt tells us, he hath done all our works in us; and in the margin the words are rendered, he hath done all our works for us; but, look into *Rom.* v. 19. you ſhall plainly ſee this freedom of the free-men of Chriſt, that they ſtand righteous in the ſight of God, by that which he hath done for them; Chriſt hath ſo wrought for them, that they are as righteous, as if they had done all in their own perſons: *As by the diſobedience of one, many were made ſinners; ſo by the obedience of one, many are made righteous:* look here, and you ſhall ſee that Chriſt doth all the work for his freemen, that they ſhould do themſelves: as if a man were commanded to bring in a thouſand bricks by ſuch a day, or elſe to have the ſtrapado; another man brings in all his bricks for him, while he doth not one for himſelf; what the other man doth for him, is accepted as a full tale, even for this man, though he doth nothing himſelf; even ſo it is with the free-men of Chriſt, he doth all for them, that God requires of them to be done; and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt ſtands in

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in that manner theirs, as if they had done it themſelves: *For by the obedience of one, many are made righteous;* not by obedience in their own perſons, but by the obedience of one man, Chriſt; even by the obedience of him alone, we ſtand thus righteous before God.

But ſome will ſay, By this it ſeems, we take away all endeavours and employment from believers, the free-men of Chriſt. Doth Chriſt do every thing for them? Do they ſtand righteous before God, in reſpect of what he hath done for them? Then they may ſit ſtill, they may do what they liſt.

I anſwer, Will you deny this, that we are righteous with God; and that we are righteous with God, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt? Or is it by our own righteouſneſs? Then mark what the apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* x. 3, 4, *They*, ſaith he, (ſpeaking of the *Jews*) *going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God; for Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.* Either you muſt diſclaim Chriſt's righteouſneſs, or you muſt diſclaim your own; for if the gift of God *be of grace, then it is not of works; elſe work is no more work: and, if it be of works, it is no more of grace, otherwiſe grace is no more grace,* Rom. xi. 6.

But you will ſay further to me, (for except a man be a mere Papiſt, I am ſure, he cannot deny but that the righteouſneſs by which I ſtand righteous before God, is the righteouſneſs Chriſt doth for me, and not that I can do for myſelf) you will aſk

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aſk me, I ſay, Doth not this take off from all manner of obedience, and all manner of holineſs?

I anſwer, and thus much I ſay, It takes them off from thoſe ends which they aim at in their obedience; namely, The end for which Chriſt's obedience ſerved; as much as to ſay, Our ſtanding righteous, by what Chriſt hath done for us, concerns us in point of juſtification, conſolation, and ſalvation; we have our juſtification, our peace, our ſalvation, only by the righteouſneſs Chriſt hath done for us: but this doth not take away our obedience, nor our ſervices, in reſpect of thoſe ends for which ſuch are now required of believers. We have yet ſeveral ends for duties and obedience; namely, That they may glorify God, and evidence our thankfulneſs; that they may be profitable to men; that they may be ordinances wherein to meet with God, to make good what he hath promiſed; ſo far we are called out to ſervices, and walking uprightly, ſincerely, exactly, and ſtrictly, according to the good pleaſure of God; and, in regard of ſuch ends, there is a gracious freedom that the free-men of Chriſt have by him; that is, ſo far forth as ſervices and obediences are expected at the free-man's hand, for the ends that I have named, there is Chriſt, by his Spirit, preſent with thoſe that are free-men, to help them in all ſuch kind of ſervices; ſo that *they become ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, to do the will of God. Mark what the apoſtle ſpeaks, *I am able to do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me. Of myſelf* (ſaith he) *I am able to do nothing; but with Chriſt,*

and

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and through him that ſtrengthens me, I am able to do all things. He that is Chriſt's free-man hath always the ſtrength of Chriſt preſent, anſwerable to that weight and burthen of employment God calls him forth unto; *My grace* (ſaith Chriſt) *ſhall be ſufficient for thee, and my ſtrength ſhall be made perfect in weakneſs:* as you are free-men of Chriſt you may confidently reſt upon it, that he *will never fail you, nor forſake you,* when he calls you forth into employments: but you that are under the law, there is much required of you, and impoſed upon you, but no help to be expected; you muſt do all by your own ſtrength; the whole tale of brick ſhall be exacted of you, but no ſtraw ſhall be given you: but you, that are free-men of Chriſt, he will help you, he will oil your wheels, fill your ſails, and carry you upon eagles' wings, that you ſhall run and not be weary, walk and not faint. So then, the free-men of Chriſt, having him and his Spirit for their life and ſtrength, may go infinitely beyond the exacteſt legaliſt in the world, in more cheerful obedience than they can perform. He that walks in his own ſtrength can never ſteer his buſineſs ſo well and ſo quickly, as he that hath the arms, the ſtrength, and the principles of the great God of heaven and earth; as he that hath this great Supporter, this wiſe Director, this mighty Aſſiſter to be continually by him. There is no burthen, you ſhall bear, but, by this freedom, you have him to put his own ſhoulder to it to bear it up.

It is wonderful to conſider, that Chriſt ſhould groan

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groan under the burthen laid upon him, by his Father, when he cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And yet *Paul* and *Silas* ſhould ſing for joy, when their bodies were covered with gore-blood by reaſon of ſtripes: how comes this to paſs, was *Paul* ſtronger than Chriſt? If not, why was he ſo joyful, and Chriſt ſo ſad? God withdrew himſelf from Chriſt, and, therefore, he ſaith, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* But the ſtrength of Chriſt was preſent with *Paul*, that this very impriſonment was a palace and recreation to him; Chriſt bare all the burthens for him. Oh! were you but the free-men of Chriſt, and did you but know it, every affliction would be but a flea-biting; for he would bear all your duties and burthens for you; he would ſtand under the greateſt weight that can be laid upon you, and bear it off your backs; the greateſt burthen ſhould never make you ſtoop, becauſe there is a ſufficient ſtrength to bear it up. There may be a heavy burthen laid upon the back of a child, and yet it may with eaſe go under it; becauſe there is a greater ſtrength that bears it up, it doth not lie upon the child. So long as Chriſt bears up your weight, it ſhall be eaſy to you. You know there is a ceremony in uſe among us, for men to carry the corpſe of their friends to the grave; for faſhion's ſake they go under the corpſe; but there are bearers appointed that bear all the weight upon their ſhoulders: ſo Chriſt bears all for his free-men; and this is the freedom men have by him, that if they are to bear any burthens, he comes

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comes and bears all for them; and they go as eaſily under them, as if they had none upon them at all.

You ſhall find the free-men of Chriſt, that they have alſo the conſtant attendance of the free Spirit of Chriſt waiting upon them. When Chriſt hath made any man free, he ſends his Spirit from heaven, firſt to acquaint the ſoul with all that he hath done for him; and not to bring good news, and be gone again; but, after the good news is brought, he waits and attends upon this free-man in all his journeys and travels to thoſe manſions that Chriſt hath prepared for him; that ſo in the way, if he ſhould faint, he would refreſh him with the water of life, to fetch it again; and, in caſe it grows weak and fails, the Spirit attends to adminiſter cordials, to revive, and to renew the ſtrength of this man again that thus fails; and, in caſe it grow weary, the Spirit is ſent to take it up into his arms, into his boſom; in caſe the way is tedious, the Spirit is ſent to take off the tediouſneſs of the way with ſweet diſcourſe, telling him, what things are laid up in fulneſs of pleaſures and glory, telling him what welcome there will be at his coming home; when there are many bye-ways in his way, that there may be no going out of the way, he will direct him and lead him by the hand, and never leave him, till he hath delivered him up into the hands of Chriſt, and carried him unto manſions in glory.*

Laſtly, In a word, to ſpeak of that, Who theſe

[* Pſalm xlviii. 14. and lxxiii. 24.]

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free-men of Chriſt are. No man knows them, but only thoſe that Chriſt takes out of bondage. Time will not give me leave to be large here; would you have any means how you may come to be the free-men of Chriſt! know this, that there is no conſideration in the buſineſs of Chriſt, for the making of men free, but only their bondage in which they are. The ſum is this, beloved, in brief, Chriſt doth not look that you ſhould come forth and meet him, to meditate, or intercede, or beg, or bring a price in your hands, that you may be his free-men; but he looks upon perſons as they are bound up, as helpleſs, as unable to will or do any thing; and, for his own compaſſion's ſake, he takes up theſe, when they little dream, or think they ever ſhall be ſet at liberty.

But, you will ſay, All ſhall not be freed that are in bondage: how ſhall I then know that I am one of the number of Chriſt's free-men?

I anſwer, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved:* if the Lord give but to thy ſpirit, now truly to believe, thou art the very man for whom Chriſt was ſent to proclaim liberty; I ſay, if thou canſt believe and roll thyſelf upon him, cleave to him, and ſay, "I will not let thee go;" this is ſecurity enough; Chriſt was ſent to deliver thee: *He that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt him out.* I beſeech you, conſider, (the Lord God, in the abundant riches of his grace, give cloſing ſpirits to ſome of you at this time,) You think there muſt be a great deal of pains, by your endeavours, and on your parts,

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parts, to have this freedom; but Chriſt doth not look for your pains; he came to ſave thoſe that could not tell which way to turn themſelves. And if the ſcripture be true, (as moſt certainly it is) if thou believeſt he is thine, if thou believe with all thy heart, thy ſins are forgiven thee; (though the very believing itſelf doth not * infeoffe you in this freedom) but, if you would know, whether you have any part in this freedom or not, believing in the Lord Chriſt is a ſufficient manifeſtation. Do but catch hold of him, to have thy deliverance by him, he muſt forſake himſelf, and deny his truth, if he caſt or throw thee off.

* Intitle to it, intereſt in it, or inveſt with it.

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SERMON IX.

Men's own Righteouſneſs their Grand Idol.

ROMANS x. 3.

For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.

PROVIDENT and well-wiſhing pilots, obſerving the rocks on which many ignorant and heedleſs paſſengers have ſplit and ſunk; and where they themſelves have eſcaped but narrowly; uſe to ſet up ſea-marks as cautions or warnings to ſuch as ſhall come after, that by other men's harms they may learn to be wary. It is the apoſtle's very practice in this place; in the former part of this epiſtle, and eſpecially in chap. ix. he mightily contends for the free grace of God unto peace, life, and ſalvation, without works: *The children being yet unborn, and having done neither good nor evil, but that the purpoſe of*

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of God might ſtand according to election, not of works, but of grace; it was ſaid, Jacob *have I loved,* Eſau *have I hated: he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens:* I ſay, this is the main doctrine that he preacheth, from the beginning of the epiſtle, to the cloſure of chap. ix.

Then he comes upon the *Jews* with an argument to their reproach: *The Gentiles that followed not after righteouſneſs, have attained unto righteouſneſs, when they themſelves that did follow after righteouſneſs could not attain it:* and he gives the reaſon why they that preſſed ſo hard after it could not attain it; *Becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.* Why, what hurt was there in that, will ſome ſay? The apoſtle anſwereth, that hereby *they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling-block, as it is written; I lay in* Sion *a ſtumbling-ſtone, and a rock of offence:* This it ſeems was the rock of offence; they would have their righteouſneſs ſet up to do them good, and this they ſought as it were by the works of the law.

But ſome men might think that the apoſtle had a bitterneſs of ſpirit, or ſome malice againſt his own brethren, and that this was but the fruit of it; therefore in the beginning of this chapter, he clears himſelf from any ſuch baſe ends in his miniſtry: for his part he wiſhes with all his heart, it may be well with them; *My heart's deſire, and prayer for* Iſrael *is, that they may be ſaved;* nay, ſo far as he may ſpeak well of them, and the moſt he can ſpeak, he will; and he will not conceal

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any thing: in verſe 2, he confeſſes, nay he bears witneſs to it, that *they had a zeal of God;* but yet he muſt not diſſemble, he muſt deal friendly, though ever ſo plainly; though they had a zeal of God, *Yet it was not according to knowledge.*

And becauſe he had taxed them with ignorance, here in the text; he diſcovers what this ignorance of theirs was; and what the fearful and deſperate fruits of it were; that whereof they were ignorant, was *God's righteouſneſs, being ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God;* the fruit of it is twofold, both very bitter, the one immediately iſſuing from the other.

Firſt, This ignorance of God's righteouſneſs put them upon a fearful miſtake; *They go about,* upon this, *to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs.*

Secondly, And that miſtake put them upon another as bad as that, if not worſe; therefore they ſubmitted not to the righteouſneſs of God.

The propoſition the words afford us, is briefly this, (for we will ſum up the whole verſe into one head) namely; *That ignorance of God's righteouſneſs puts men upon theſe two dangerous miſchiefs, an eſtabliſhing of their own righteouſneſs, and not ſubmitting themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.*

Men will eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs: they will not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God, while they are ignorant of it. Beloved, they were not ſo eaſily miſled, as we are apt to follow them, having gone before us; we are like ſheep leaping without looking, if any leap before us; it hath been the rock of offence, a ſtumbling-

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ſtone from the beginning to this day, and will be to the end of the world; there will be an eſtabliſhing of our own righteouſneſs, without ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God, while there is an ignorance of this righteouſneſs.

Now, that we may take warning, and ſo eſcape the danger, that they have felt the ſmart of already, it will be requiſite we take into conſideration,

Firſt, What this righteouſneſs of theirs and ours is, that they did, and we are apt to go about to eſtabliſh.

Secondly, What it is to go about to eſtabliſh this our righteouſneſs.

Thirdly, What this righteouſneſs of God is that they did not ſubmit unto.

Fourthly, What it is, not to ſubmit unto this righteouſneſs of God.

Fifthly, What this ignorance is, from whence both theſe fearful evils iſſue, the eſtabliſhing of our own righteouſneſs, and not ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God.

And, *laſtly*, What the iſſue in the end will prove. Of theſe, or as many of theſe as the time will permit in their order.

To begin with the firſt, What is that righteouſneſs of theirs and ours, that the apoſtle complains of, that being eſtabliſhed, is a rock of offence?

I am not ignorant, that the eyes of ſome perſons are only, or moſt, upon a righteouſneſs of man's own deviſing and contriving; ſuch a righteouſneſs as never came into God's thoughts; a righteouſneſs

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neſs according to the precepts and traditions of men; ſuch a righteouſneſs as our Saviour, in *Mat.* xv. 9. taxeth the Phariſees withal, who *Taught for doctrines the traditions of men;* and by their own traditions, as much as in them lay, made void the commandments of God: this kind of righteouſneſs in our time proceeds from the preſumption of men, that dare put any thing of their own, without warrant and commiſſion from God, into the worſhip and ſervice of God; charging things upon men as duties of religion, that God binds not men unto: for my own part, I am clear of the mind, that this kind of righteouſneſs is far from the righteouſneſs of God, the apoſtle here ſpeaks of; and that it is the higheſt preſumption that a man can poſſibly take upon himſelf, to ſet himſelf ſo in the place of God, as not only, not to command from him, but alſo to command without and againſt him: law-givers hold themſelves then moſt diſparaged and contemned, when any inferior will take upon him to make laws without them, or againſt them. It will lie heavy when it ſhall once come to an account, not only upon the actors, but alſo upon thoſe that may be the redreſſers, if this kind of righteouſneſs eſtabliſhed by ſome be not brought down, and laid in the duſt.

But, under favour, I conceive that the apoſtle aims at a more ſublime righteouſneſs, than the righteouſneſs in the precepts of men; he ſpeaks of ſuch a righteouſneſs, which ſome it may be are too forward to eſtabliſh, who yet abhor to eſtabliſh the other,

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other, we have now ſpoken of: the righteouſneſs the apoſtle complains of being eſtabliſhed, is not the righteouſneſs of man's making, but of God's own making, a righteouſneſs according to his own will; I mean a righteouſneſs conſiſting in obedience to the things that God himſelf hath commanded unto men; a righteouſneſs which is a walking in all the commandments of God, though it be in a way of blameleſsneſs; this very righteouſneſs, I ſay, is that, which being eſtabliſhed, proves a ſtumbling-ſtone, and a rock of offence to all that ſhall eſtabliſh it.

This may ſeem harſh, beloved, at firſt, but I ſhall make it clear to you from the apoſtle's own interpretation of himſelf, who beſt knew his own mind: that this is the righteouſneſs he here ſpeaks of, mark but the words immediately following the text, chap. x. 4, *For*, ſaith he, *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*; to what purpoſe doth he bring this paſſage, that Chriſt is the end of the law; but that by theſe words he might confute their vanity, who think to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs in the fulfilling of the law? As if he ſhould ſay, you think by your keeping the law, by your righteouſneſs you perform, you can attain to the end of it, that ſo you may obtain the grace and goodneſs of the Lord; but it is in vain, it is not you that can reach the end of the law; neither doth God aim at it that you ſhould reach it, but he hath conſtituted and ordained Chriſt to be the end of it. Therefore the righteouſneſs of God muſt be the

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the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; the righteouſneſs that God aims at is perfect, a righteouſneſs that reaches to the very end of the law; your righteouſneſs can never reach to the end of it; it is Chriſt's alone that doth it.

And yet again, in verſe 5, the apoſtle clears more fully what he means by our righteouſneſs; for there he begins to make the diſtinction between our righteouſneſs, and the righteouſneſs of God, explaining what they both are: *Moſes*, ſaith he, *deſcribing the righteouſneſs of the law*, ſaith thus, (that which he calls our own righteouſneſs, in verſe 4, from *Moſes*, he calls the righteouſneſs of the law, in verſe 5,) *He that doth thoſe things ſhall even live in them:* and if you will look into *Levit.* xviii. 5. you ſhall there ſee what the righteouſneſs of the law is, which the apoſtle ſpeaks of in this place; and if you obſerve but the margin of your bible, you ſhall find this very text, in verſe 5, is wiſely referred to that of *Leviticus*, *You ſhall keep my ſtatutes, and do my judgments; which if a man do, he ſhall even live in them.* See, the apoſtle makes uſe of the very phraſe, *he that doth them ſhall live through them, and in them.* It is the *righteouſneſs of the law*, ſaith he; it is the *keeping of God's ſtatutes, and doing of God's judgments*, ſaith *Moſes*. By this, you may ſee what righteouſneſs it is, that the Lord by the apoſtle ſpeaks of; a righteouſneſs that conſiſts *in doing the ſtatutes and judgments of the Lord.*

And if you will but conſider in *Luke* xviii. 11, 12, the condition of the phariſee, Chriſt ſpeaks of, who

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who went up into the temple to pray as the publican did; in him you shall see, I say, and easily perceive, what the righteousness was, that they went about to establish; for there the pharisee justifies himself in respect of many particular branches of the law; *I thank thee*, saith he, *I am not as other men are, an extortioner, unjust, an adulterer, nor as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I pay tithes of all that I possess.* Mark it well, I pray, see what it is that he pleads for, as that which must prevail with God for good to him; it is his own righteousness; and what is that? It is a righteousness according to the law; it is a righteousness of piety, of justice; *I fast twice in the week, I am no extortioner, nor unjust person, nor adulterer, &c.* Now hear Christ's answer concerning this pharisee; you shall see what he thinks of this righteousness he speaks of; *The publican went away rather justified than he;* and the reason is, because he did go in the strength of this righteousness of his, to speed with God; his expectation was from this: it was not a righteousness of his own devising and contriving; but a righteousness according to God's law.

If you look further into *Philip.* iii. you shall find, the apostle speaks fully to the case in hand, instancing in himself, in verse 5, 6, 7, where he gives an account of his estate, in which he was before the time of his conversion. *First*, he saith, he had a zeal for God, and that put him on so hot, that he persecuted the church of God, merely out of ignorance; for, saith he of himself, *I did it ignorantly;*

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ignorantly: and *concerning the righteouſneſs of the law,* ſaith he, *I was blameleſs;* mark that paſſage well; all this was before converſion; afterwards he tells us, this was in the time of his ignorance, wherein he made full account that this righteouſneſs of his was his gain; but, ſaith he, *what was gain to me, I accounted loſs; yea, and I ſuffer the loſs of all things, that I may be found in Chriſt, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is by the law.* By all theſe paſſages, I ſay, put together, wherein the apoſtle ſo fully expounds himſelf, it plainly appears, that the righteouſneſs of the law, the eſtabliſhing whereof, he here taxeth, as a dangerous miſtake, and a fruit of ignorance, is that, wherein men walk according to God's own law blameleſly.

I am not ignorant, beloved, how this aſſertion goeth under the foul blur of *Antinomianiſm,* that blameleſs walking according to the law, being eſtabliſhed, is a fruit of ignorance, and a cauſe of men's not *ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God.* And no marvel it goes for ſuch now; for, in the apoſtle's time it was accounted ſo; nay, it was objected againſt the apoſtle himſelf, as direct *Antinomianiſm;* and, therefore, he was enforced to vindicate himſelf thus, *Do we make void the law,* ſaith he, *through faith? God forbid!* He takes away the objection they put to him, upon his eſtabliſhing of God's righteouſneſs, and his overthrowing our righteouſneſs. It was objected, that hereby he went about to make void the law; and, therefore, it is no marvel it holds ſtill as an objection,

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tion, that the maintaining of this principle is the overthrowing of the law. But, beloved, I muſt ſay to you, as the apoſtle did in the ſame caſe, *God forbid! yea, we eſtabliſh the law*, that is to ſay, in its right place. It takes men off from performing duties to corrupt ends, and from the bad uſe they are apt to make of them, namely idolizing their own righteouſneſs. And, therefore, he doth not condemn the uſe of the law, and our righteouſneſs, ſimply: that which he ſpeaks againſt here, is the eſtabliſhing of our righteouſneſs. Our own righteouſneſs is good in its kind, and for its own proper uſes; but then it proves a fruit of ſin, ignorance, and a dangerous ſtumbling-block, and an idol, when we go about to eſtabliſh it.

I come, therefore, to the *ſecond* thing, which is to clear this truth more fully, namely, What it is to eſtabliſh this righteouſneſs; or what eſtabliſhing the apoſtle drives at in this place.

For the clearing of which, the antitheſis, or the oppoſition, that he ſets, will give you a great deal of light to underſtand his meaning and purpoſe here, by *going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, and not ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God.* He ſpeaks here, therefore, of ſuch an eſtabliſhing of our righteouſneſs, according to the law, as to bring it into the room, and ſtead, or place of God's righteouſneſs. It is ſuch an eſtabliſhing of it, as that for it we cannot, nor will not admit, that the righteouſneſs of God ſhould do its office. So far forth, then, as any righteouſneſs of ours encroaches upon the privileges and prerogatives of the righteouſneſs

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teouſneſs of God, ſo that that cannot do its own work, or at leaſt muſt be circumſcribed in doing it, by this; ſo far is there an eſtabliſhing of our own righteouſneſs, which is a fruit of ignorance, and is a ſtumbling-block, and a rock of offence.

It will be worth the while, therefore, to conſider, When our righteouſneſs is ſaid truly to be eſtabliſhed in the room and ſtead of the righteouſneſs of God. This will be cleared by the conſideration of the main ſcope and drift of men, in the performing of the righteouſneſs which they eſtabliſh. When men put that upon their own righteouſneſs, which ſhould have been put upon God's only; when men make that the ſanctuary and refuge that God's righteouſneſs only ſhould be; then is it ſet up as a grand idol, and eſtabliſhed in the room and place of God's righteouſneſs. To clear the caſe to you, by ſome particular inſtances; it is a thing of great importance, as at all times, ſo now at this time of eminent danger, the ſword being over our heads, and over the whole nation; (the Lord having revealed to the ſpirits of men, by his truth, that in caſe of eminent danger, there ſhould be a great deal of zeal to God) that the people of God ſhould be put mightily on, to deal with God in this preſent extremity and neceſſity; but, I am afraid, many *have a zeal of God*, in this very caſe, but yet, *not according to knowledge*; for that too many (ignorantly and zealouſly, I confeſs, yet, I ſay, too many) in this zeal to God, for their own ſafety and ſecurity, too much eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs: and, I fear, if there be a miſ-

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carriage after ſo many faſting-days, and ſo much praying and ſeeking God, that the fruits will be the eſtabliſhing of our own righteouſneſs, in the room and place of the righteouſneſs of God. As for example, when ſin abounds, whether perſonally, or generally, what is the way to get off, or get out of ſuch tranſgreſſion? I appeal to your own ſpirits, you that are ſpiritual; is not this your end, you propound? To faſt, and pray, and mourn it out; this is that which muſt bring you a diſcharge of your ſins; this is that which muſt bring you tidings that God will be pacified towards you, that God will turn away his anger from you; if you do but faſt ſpiritually, mourn bitterly, pray zealouſly with ſtrength of ſpirit, this is that that ſhall overcome God.

I aſk, or I beſeech you rather aſk your own ſpirits, (I mean ſtill, you that are ſpiritual) Do not your hearts run out continually this way? Do they, or do they not? What then mean all the complaints of yours upon the defects of your faſtings, your humiliation, ſelf-denial, and the ſubduing of your corruptions? That this is that which pulls down the wrath of God upon us; is not this common among us, as long as men do not mend, there is no hope that God will? and, if every man would mend one, this is the way to redreſs the evil of the times? Beloved, let me deal plainly and freely with you; they that put deliverance from ſin and wrath, upon the ſpiritual performances of that righteouſneſs, which the law commands them, they put that righteouſneſs in the

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the room and place of the righteouſneſs of God; they make it as great an idol as can be; for they make it to be that, which God's righteouſneſs only is. I ſpeak not againſt the doing of any righteouſneſs according to the will of God revealed; let that mouth be for ever ſtopped, that ſhall be opened to blame the law that is holy, juſt, and good; or ſhall be a means to diſcourage people from walking in the commandments of God blameleſs*.

All that I ſpeak is this, That it will prove a rock of offence in the end, if it be not turned from; namely, That we ſhould expect that our own righteouſneſs ſhould bring down a gracious anſwer from God to our ſpirits; that when we have done our work, in effect, that muſt prove our mediator and meſſenger from God; and, as that will ſpeak, ſo will we have peace, or remain in bitterneſs of ſpirit. What can the righteouſneſs of God himſelf do more than this, to have power with God, to prevail over God for good to us?

Beloved, although ſome, peradventure, may magnify performances done in a ſpiritual way with attributes and titles even of God's own peculiar; I mean with attributes of omnipotency and invincibleneſs; certainly there is no omnipotency but in God himſelf, and the righteouſneſs that is God's own; the beſt righteouſneſs that ever any man could act, or perform in all his life, is not able to divert the leaſt effect of ſins, or wrath, or

* Is this *Antinomianiſm?* Or, can ſuch a preacher be called an *Antinomian?*

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procure or obtain the leaſt ſmile of favour from God. You know, that *God is a God of purer eyes, and cannot behold iniquity;* you know, that iniquity is that which ſeparates between God and a people; now what is the perfecteſt righteouſneſs which the beſt man upon earth performs? Is it not full of unrighteouſneſs and iniquity? *All our righteouſneſſes* (ſaith the prophet *Iſaiah*) *are but as filthy rags;* and, ſaith the apoſtle, *I account all as dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs.* Is there dung and filth in the beſt of man's righteouſneſs; and can this righteouſneſs have power with God, and prevail over him?

Look upon Chriſt himſelf, when he did bear the ſins of many, upon his own perſon; he himſelf was deſerted and forſaken of God, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Is Chriſt forſaken, when the ſins of men are upon him, and ſhall men's perſons be accepted and received in reſpect of ſuch an act of theirs that carries ſinfulneſs in the face of it? Nay, that carries an univerſal leproſy in the nature of it? Suppoſe your righteouſneſs were a fulfilling of the whole law of God, if you fail but in one point, that very failing in one point, makes you guilty of the breach of all the reſt; and, when men ſtand guilty before God, ſhall they plead that which is full of guilt, to procure favour, mercy, or grace from him? No, no, the ſacrifice of God, which is accepted of him, muſt be a male lamb, and *a lamb without blemiſh;* till, therefore, you can purge your righteouſneſs,

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righteouſneſs, and ſeparate all iniquity from it, know that all your righteouſneſs in its own nature doth but ſeparate you from God; ſo far is it from prevailing with him.

Surely, will ſome ſay, the righteouſneſs that is performed according to the will of God, pleaſes him, and moves and melts him, and prevails with him to do this and that good to his people.

I anſwer, Too many people in the world too much ſtint the will of God, ſo much ſpoken of when they ſpeak of a righteouſneſs according to it, or a righteouſneſs to do it; what is it? It is true indeed, righteouſneſs done according to the will of God, infinitely prevails with God; but ſhew me the man that can perform it, a mere man without Chriſt? Shew me a man that ever did, or ever can do this, acting righteouſneſs according to the will of God? *Of myſelf*, ſaith *Paul*, *I can do nothing: without me*, ſaith Chriſt, *ye can do nothing;* nay, the apoſtle goes further, *How to perform that which is good, I find not*, Rom. vii. 18. whilſt men conceive that the will of God conſiſts only in the materials of righteouſneſs; peradventure they may think theirs is according to it; but alas the materials of righteouſneſs, are but the leaſt part of the will of God wherewith he is pleaſed: now to do an act partly with the will of God, and partly againſt it, is this to do an act according to it? To do ſomething that God calls for at your hands in ſome things, and to walk directly contrary to him in others; is this to do his will? Suppoſe for the matter, the righteouſneſs

ouſneſs you do, be according to the will of God, that you do the thing that he calls for of you; as for inſtance, you faſt, and pray, and the like; do you think you do theſe things according to the will of God, becauſe the outward act is done? The will of God extends to the manner of doing, to the diſpoſition of the perſon that is to do, as well as to the matter: as in *Iſaiah* i. were not *New moons, and ſabbaths, and ſolemn aſſemblies*, God's own ordinances? And was not the performance of them materially according to the will of God? Yet, nevertheleſs, God loathed this ſervice of righteouſneſs; he was weary of it, he could not bear it; there was ſinfulneſs mixed with it; *your hands are full of blood*, ſaith the Lord; and, therefore, though the things were materially according to his will, yet his ſoul abhorred them, being done amiſs.

Suppoſe men go further, than ſimply doing things according to the will of God materially; they do not only the things, but do them ſpiritually, with enlargedneſs of heart and affection; you faſt, and you faſt with bitterneſs of ſpirit, you eat bitter herbs in faſting; you mourn, and you mourn bitterly, for your tranſgreſſions; you pray, and pray zealouſly, in the heat and fervour of your ſpirits: now if all this be not done in faith, it is abominable; *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; He that comes to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that ſeek him:* he that hath performed a duty, and expects from that performance, an anſwer accord-

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ing to his mind, he doth not do it in faith; for *we muſt do all we do in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſaith the apoſtle; and *when we have done all, muſt ſay, we are unprofitable ſervants*; and it muſt be Chriſt alone that muſt prevail with the Father for us: all our righteouſneſs will prevail nothing at all with God, nor move him a jot, except it be to pull down wrath: there is not one act of righteouſneſs that a perſon doth, but when that is finiſhed, there is more tranſgreſſion belonging to him, than before he had performed it: and there is no compoſition, there is no buying out of evil by good doings; the doing of good doth not make a recompence for what ſin doth; we pay but our debts in doing good; ſo that as there is a new righteouſneſs performed, there is ſtill a new reckoning added to the former; by acting of righteouſneſs, you make up a greater number of ſins* than before; ſo that it is only Chriſt from whom we muſt have the expectation of ſucceſs, in whatſoever thing we deſire.

In a word, let a man's righteouſneſs be never ſo exact; yet that is not according to the will of God, which hath not God's ends, which he propoſeth in the doing of righteouſneſs: you ſhall find the general rule of Chriſt, and his apoſtles, to be this, that what we do, we muſt not only do it in the name of Chriſt, but alſo to the Lord, and for the Lord: *Being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, let us ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs*; it is not, let us ſerve ourſelves in

[* Rom. xiv. 23.]

holineſs

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holineſs and righteouſneſs, but let us ſerve him; *You are bought with a price, therefore,* ſaith the apoſtle, *glorify God in your bodies, and ſpirits, for they are God's;* he doth not ſay, being bought with a price, let us now ſeek our own good, as if we were ſtill our own men; as if we had now liberty to trade for our own ſelves: you are *not your own,* and therefore not your own, becauſe you are *bought with a price;* therefore *glorify God in your bodies and ſpirits.* It is moſt certainly true, that God having provided through Chriſt all things appertaining to life and godlineſs for his people; thereby calls them off from all ſelf-ends, and bye-reſpects in his ſervices, to have only reſpect to him in them; he hath done all that may be done for yourſelves.

But ſome may ſay peradventure, this is a way to overthrow all righteouſneſs at once: what, all that ever a man doth, though he doth ever ſo ſpiritually, though ever ſo exactly, to no purpoſe, and in vain? Doth a man get nothing by all the righteouſneſs he performs? Then we had as good ſit ſtill, and do nothing at all, will ſome ſay.

I anſwer, This is carnal reaſoning indeed; look but into the ground of this argument, and it will diſcover nothing but the ſelfiſhneſs of the perſon that makes it: I dare be bold to ſay, that that man that will do no righteouſneſs, but ſimply for his own ſake; who, if he ſhould know before hand, that his righteouſneſs will get him nothing, would therefore ſit ſtill, and do nothing; I dare be bold to ſay, he had as good ſit ſtill indeed, and do no-

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thing: he ſerves himſelf, not God, and though he performs righteouſneſs ever ſo exactly, if he ſerves himſelf, God will never reckon that he ſerves him: when ſelf is eyed, we can never ſerve God; when our commodity and advantage be not in the thing, we will ſit ſtill.

But, beloved, though the righteouſneſs we are to perform be ſuperfluous and vain, in reſpect of any power it hath with God to move him to do us good, yet it is not altogether ſuperfluous; it is moſt true, that all the righteouſneſs of man cannot prevail with God, to do us good; there is but one mover of God, the man Chriſt Jeſus, who is the only and ſole mediator. If you will have your own righteouſneſs to be your mediator with God, to ſpeak to God for you, to prevail with God for you; what is this, but to put it in the room and place of Chriſt's? What is the mediatorſhip of Chriſt elſe, but for him to come between God and man, and be the days-man to lay his hand upon both, and at once to reconcile them? and ſhall your righteouſneſs be the days-man, and lay hands upon God and man; then farewel Chriſt, and his mediatorſhip; for this is the peculiar office of Chriſt, to be man's mediator, and advocate with the Father, to prevail with him for any good for us; ſo far therefore as any perſon looks after his own righteouſneſs, to bring glad tidings from God to him, ſo far a man eſtabliſheth it in the room and place of the righteouſneſs of God; which proceeds from the ignorance of that righteouſneſs, and will in the end prove a ſtumbling-

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ſtumbling-block to men, and a rock of offence to them.

All this while I deſire not to be miſtaken: ſome, it may be, will deſire to know then to what uſe this righteouſneſs of ours ſerves, ſeeing it is not of power to prevail with God. *My goodneſs extends not unto thee*, ſaith *David*; not to God, but it may to men; *my righteouſneſs extends to the ſaints of the earth, and to ſuch as excel in virtue*, Pſalm xvi. 3. Our righteouſneſs is appointed for excellent uſes, if we could be contented with thoſe God hath ordained it unto.

Firſt, It ſerves as a real way to manifeſt our thankfulneſs to God, for what we have already received of him: in *Pſalm* ciii. *David* is excellent, *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul! and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name:* why, what is the matter, *David? Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diſeaſes, who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindneſs and tender mercies:* mark it well, I pray, all that is within us muſt be praiſe, and nothing but praiſe; and the ground is this, God pardons our ſins, heals our infirmities, and ſupplies all our wants; in conſideration of this, all that is within us ſhould continually expreſs his praiſe.

Again, *ſecondly*, There is this uſefulneſs in it, namely, that we may ſerve our generation; and the apoſtle gives this charge, that *men ſtudy to maintain good works*, becauſe, ſaith he, *theſe things are profitable unto men;* as we may therefore do good to men, ſo according to our ability, and talent

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talent received, we muſt employ ourſelves to the utmoſt for that end and purpoſe. The heathens could ſay, *They were not made for themſelves, but for others:* therefore there is this uſefulneſs in our righteouſneſs, that others may receive benefit by it; *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they, ſeeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven;* that men may be drawn on to glorify God, we muſt ſhine before men in a godly converſation.

Thirdly, It is uſeful, as it is the ordinance of God, wherein the Lord hath appointed us to meet with him, and wherein he will make good thoſe things which before he hath promiſed. And this is the very end and ground of our faſting, praying, and mourning in our exigencies, and extremities; not that theſe duties do at all prevail with God, or at all move him; for, it is God that moves even theſe ſervices, and all the ſpiritualneſs in us in them; and therefore he moves them in us, becauſe when we are moved by his Spirit, and according to his will come forth to meet him where he appoints, there he will pour out himſelf in grace and love, according to his promiſe, not according to our performances. Thus, I ſay, this great objection may be anſwered eaſily, why we faſt, and pray, and mourn in adverſity, if they do us no good? I ſay, though they do us no good, yet we faſt and pray, in that the Lord ſaith, come to me, meet me in this and that ordinance, and I will come with my hands full; then, and there, I will pour out that which mine own freeneſs

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neſs hath engaged me to do for you: is it not injuſtice not to meet him then? We confeſs our ſins to him, but what is the ground of forgiveneſs? not our confeſſion of ſins, not our faſtings, prayers, mourning, and tears; but *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy iniquities, for mine own name ſake, and will remember thy ſins no more.*

I will draw towards the concluſion. In a word, whoever he be that is ſelfiſh in his own righteouſneſs, and goes about to eſtabliſh it in the room of God's, labouring to procure ſome good unto himſelf thereby, and makes that righteouſneſs do that for him, that God's righteouſneſs ſhould do, ſo making an idol of it;

Firſt, He plays the moſt diſhoneſt part with God that can be. Do you profeſs yourſelves to be the ſervants of God? If you be, what diſhoneſty is there in you, that you profeſſing to ſerve him, do, notwithſtanding, by ſecret and by ſtealth, ſerve yourſelves? If an apprentice ſhould hide himſelf all day long, to earn and gain money for himſelf, might not his maſter juſtly tax him for a diſhoneſt fellow? Why doth the maſter keep him, and find him, but that all that he doth, he ſhould do for him, and not for himſelf? Are you at God's finding, or are you at your own? Miſerable are you, that are at your own; are you at God's finding then, and not at your own? What is it you ſeek for, and would get by the righteouſneſs you ſeek ſo eagerly after? The truth is, there is nothing to be gotten that you have not already; if you have Chriſt, all things are yours,

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yours, and you are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's. Are you one of Chriſt's? A man need not work for that which is his own already; why then do you work for that which is yours already? Are you in Chriſt, or are you not? Do you work to get into Chriſt? Alas! how long might men work out of Chriſt, and work themſelves into hell at laſt? What can a man get of God by all his righteouſneſs and works, if he hath not Chriſt to get it for him? Therefore all things are yours, becauſe you are Chriſt's, or elſe you ſhall have nothing at all. God gives nothing of gift, and of his dear love, but as men are in Chriſt, and for his ſake; therefore you do but labour in vain, if you labour for that which is yet to be produced.

But to do good to others; *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren:* let theſe be the ends of your ſervices; work becauſe good is already made ſure to you, and not to make it ſure: when a father ſettles an inheritance upon his ſon, he makes the deed ſo, that the ſon ſhall not work for the father's means; becauſe the father hath paſſed over all that he hath to his ſon, he ſerves out of love, for what he hath already received, not for what is hoped for.

And as there is a diſhoneſty in ſelf-ſeeking; ſo, *ſecondly*, there is a foul blur caſt upon God. Beloved, if you ſhould ſee a ſervant go about the ſtreets complaining thus, Sir, help me to a little work, I muſt ſtarve except I can work for myſelf: what would you think of this man's maſter? Surely,

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Surely, you will ſay, he is a hard maſter, that his ſervant muſt ſtarve, except he ſeek for himſelf, and purvey for himſelf: you that ſay in your hearts, you are undone, you muſt periſh, you are loſt, except your prayers and humbling of yourſelves can get ſome ſupply; is not this a working for yourſelves? Is not this plain ſaying, there is no truſting to God, and that we muſt work for ourſelves, or elſe we ſhall periſh.

I ſhould come to conſider the other particulars in this text; but time not permitting, we will wind up all in one word of application.

We now ſtand before the Lord, and, among other mercies, we expect this great mercy, ſalvation; not only ſalvation in heaven, but ſalvation from the ſword: it is not, it muſt not be your good doings that muſt procure it; or your repentance, that muſt bring it; you muſt not reſt upon your performances to get it; do all that God calls for when you are in his way; in this reſpect be doing; but as for your help look up unto the hills from whence it cometh; your help ſtands in the name of the Lord, that made heaven and earth; and, therefore, in the expectation of help, all your buſineſs muſt lie in this, *Stand ſtill, and ſee the ſalvation of the Lord.*

SERMON

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SERMON X.

A Zeal of God proves not a Man a Child of God.

ROMANS x. 2, 3, 4.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge: for they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God: for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth.

THE apostle, in the former chapter, more plainly and fully lays down the absolute freeness of the grace of God alone to peace, life, and salvation, than any where else; clearly shewing, that merely and only for his own good pleasure-sake, he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; especially in that instance of *Jacob* and *Esau*, he tells us plainly, that God hath no regard in the world unto good or evil, that might

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might be done by either of them; but, before ever they could do any ſuch thing, it is expreſsly written of them, Jacob *have I loved, and* Eſau *have I hated.*

And the reaſon, why God takes nothing into his conſideration, either good or evil done by the creature as a motive to his love, the apoſtle gives there, is this, *That the purpoſe of God might ſtand, according to election; not of works, but of grace;* that is, that all the world may ſee that the firſt thoughts of God, in his election, had no eye in the world unto any thing that the creature might do, which ſhould have any prevalency with him, to ſway him this way, or that way; it was not the conſideration of *Eſau*, as one that would be reſolute and peremptory in a way of ſinfulneſs, that was a motive with God to reject him; nor was it the conſideration of any propenſity in the ſpirit of *Jacob* to yield unto calling, or of any inclination in *Jacob* to glorify him being called; I ſay, none of theſe conſiderations entered into the thoughts of God, when he eſtabliſhed his love, even in election itſelf, upon *Jacob;* his thoughts were merely upon his own good pleaſure within himſelf: as if he ſhould ſee a whole heap of creatures together, and, as it were, (if I may ſo ſpeak) blindfold of any good the creature could have to move him; he picked out this, and that, and the other, without reſpect of any difference between them.

Then he comes in the cloſure of chap. ix. to ſhew how deſperately his own brethren, after the fleſh,

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flesh, the *Jews*, did reject this revealed will and pleasure of God, concerning good to men; they would have something considerable in the creature, as of prevalence to move God to do good to such, rather than such a one: this very conceit, the apostle calls a stumbling-block, at which they fell.

Now, least he should seem to speak all this out of spite, or prejudice, or through the injuries they had done to him; therefore, that he might not thus be understood, at the beginning of this chapter he confesses, *That his heart's desire, and prayer, was that they might be saved:* he bore no ill-will in the world to them; nay, he saith, *That he would be contented to be even cut off for his brethren's sake.* And, after he had acquitted himself from sinister respects, he begins to declare the truth as it is in Jesus; and first he comes to tax them, and shew where their error lay, and grants it lay not in any defect of zeal of, or after God; *For* (saith he) *I bear them record, they have a zeal of God:* if this would have served their turns, to be zealous for God himself, there was no defect in that; the apostle will testify for them, that they were exceeding cordial, and not in respect of themselves, but in respect of God himself; they had not a zeal simply for their own base ends, but had an eye to God himself; it was *a zeal of God*, whether you consider it as wrought by God, or as tending unto him; either way, their zeal was *a zeal of God*, a zeal after God. I know, that there may be a zeal wrought by God, in respect of common mercy,

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or in reſpect of peculiar mercy; this was a zeal of the common mercy of God.

Thus much in effect, I have ſpoken heretofore upon this text; upon which I made ſeveral enquiries: as, *firſt*, What righteouſneſs of their own this was, which they went about to eſtabliſh. *Secondly*, What is it to eſtabliſh a man's own righteouſneſs. Which two, I have handled in my former diſcourſe upon this text. Notwithſtanding, I ſhall, at this time, ſpeak ſomething more largely concerning the *ſecond*, and ſo, if the time will permit, proceed unto the reſt of my enquiry; but, by the way, I ſhall ſpeak ſomething concerning the zeal here mentioned by the apoſtle.

Therefore, before I quit theſe words, give me leave to tell you, it is poſſible a perſon may have *a zeal of God*, and yet be far from being a believer; let that be the firſt obſervation: I ground it thus; of the *Jews* of whom *Paul* ſpeaks, he himſelf *bears record, they had a zeal of God;* but, in the next words he ſays, *they eſtabliſhed their own righteouſneſs, and did not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God.* A zeal of God is not ground or evidence enough that a perſon is a believer, or that he hath received, or ſubmitted himſelf to Chriſt. *Firſt*, Beloved, becauſe this may ſeem to be harſh, I beſeech you to conſider ſeriouſly, how undeniable and clear the poſition, I have laid down, is founded in the text itſelf: I ſay, there may be *a zeal of God* in an unbeliever; ſo the apoſtle bears record of theſe *Jews;* there was *a zeal of God, yet not according to knowledge;* even, when they had it, *they eſtabliſhed*

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bliſhed their own righteouſneſs: they did not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God. I will not dwell upon this point; all that I ſhall ſay on it, is only that I may undeceive many that are very ſubject to deceive themſelves; and that I may take them off from a ſandy foundation: and ſo, if it be poſſible, reduce them to a rock, who are apt to build upon the ſand.

I know, beloved, it is cried up much in the hearts of many poor wretches; I ſay, cried up much, that if they have but zeal of God in their hearts, it is enough to ſerve them for ever; they are believers, members of Chriſt; and it is injurious unto the people of God, as they think, to tell them, Thoſe that have a zeal of God in their hearts, yet, for all that, may *not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God;* but ſtumble, at the ſtumbling-ſtone, and fall for ever.

All the difficulty, I know, lies in this, What it is for perſons to have *a zeal of God?* Or whether there be not *a zeal of God* in thoſe that are believers, which is palpably diſcerned, from that in thoſe that do *not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God?* I grant, there is a difference; but as this zeal of God hath reference to our righteouſneſs, or unto an obedience to the law, you will hardly find a difference. A zeal of God to ſet up God in Chriſt, to give Chriſt the pre-eminence in all, that nothing is to be done with him, but only by Jeſus Chriſt; to throw down every thing in the world, that offers to come in with Chriſt, to deal with the Father; I ſay, *a zeal of God,* in this kind, is not common

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common to any perſon, that *ſubmits not to the righteouſneſs of God:* but to be zealous, that is to ſay, to be cordial, hearty, real, and that with fervency, and earneſtneſs of ſpirit, towards obedience to the commandments of God, and to have an eye, in ſuch obedience, to God himſelf, to ſeek him in it; this, I ſay, is *a zeal of God*, that is common unto ſuch as do *not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God*, as well as to thoſe that do ſubmit to it; therefore, as there is a community in this zeal, ſo this is not poſſibly able ſufficiently to clear up to perſons, that becauſe they are thus zealous, therefore they are the children of God, and have the righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Theſe *Jews*, the apoſtle here ſpeaks of, (mark it well, beloved) were exceeding vehement, even in ſetting up, and promoting obedience to the commandments of God, I ſay, with an earneſtneſs of ſpirit; as when they offered to ſtone Chriſt himſelf, (the *Phariſees* I mean) it was merely out of the extremity of their zeal, and fervency of ſpirit, becauſe they conceived he was a great blaſphemer, and breaker of God's will, for making himſelf equal with God: how could they contain themſelves, ſo long as Chriſt would, as they thought, uſurp and preſume ſo far, as to take the incommunicable privileges and immunities of God himſelf? The apoſtle ſaith of himſelf, and of the reſt of the *Jews*, *If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; and*, ſaith he, *though I perſecuted the church of God, yet I did it ignorantly.* All this reſults to thus much, that the

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the mere incroaching upon God, as they underſtood, was that which put them on ſo hot, eager, and violent a revenge of God's quarrel; ſo that, I ſay, the eye may be upon God, and, for his ſake, men may be exceeding zealous, earneſt, and fervent for the vindication of him, for the doing of his will revealed in the law; and yet, for all this, there may not be a ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs that is in God.

I apply it thus, There are many people in the world, to whom the mind of God, in the law, is made known, we muſt not commit adultery, *&c.* ſimply becauſe God commands this thing, they refrain from the evil; they go through all the commandments of God zealouſly; they look upon it as the will of God revealed to them, and do it for God's ſake, thus imparting his own mind; they abſtain and refrain from the evil they do, and perform the good, becauſe God requires it of them; yet all this is no argument of a perſon's being a real member of Chriſt; for all this, he may not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

Now I will add ſomething, according as I propoſed, to that which hath been heretofore ſaid unto the *ſecond* enquiry, namely, how, and wherein our righteouſneſs is eſtabliſhed inſtead of the righteouſneſs of God. *Firſt*, then, obſerve, that theſe phariſees *went about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs*, ſaith the apoſtle; this righteouſneſs they went about to eſtabliſh, what was it? a righteouſneſs according to the law of God; *Chriſt is*

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is the end of the law to every one that believes: as if he had ſaid, you, in the zeal of your ſpirits, think to come to the end of the law yourſelves, but miſtake not, if you have in your eye the expectation of comfort and peace, and reſt in your ſpirits, from the largeneſs of your ſpirits in the performance of thoſe duties; this is enough to make you miſcarry, though it be for the Lord's ſake you do it. Let me tell you, that the Lord hath ſo eſtabliſhed Chriſt, for the reſt and life of men, that if they could yield angelic obedience, be perfect throughout in obedience to the whole law of God, and not fail in one point of it; if, I ſay, from ſuch perfection of obedience they would gather up their own comfort, or conclude their own ſalvation; theſe perſons ſhould be damned, as well as thoſe that ſin ever ſo much: for God hath eſtabliſhed Chriſt, and only his righteouſneſs, to be the ſalvation of man; I ſay, only the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; that if a man were ever ſo perfect, and in reſpect of that perfection, would leave the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and lean to the perfection of his own, for his peace, and ſalvation; that man would miſcarry, and be damned.

Beloved, all I aim at is this, that you build not upon foundations that will fail you, when you come to the trial: there is (as you ſhall hear by and by, if time and ſtrength permit) abſolutely perfection enough in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone, for your reſt and ſecurity, that you ſhall not need to truſt to any thing you do for peace or

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life; this is that which God calls you to, to go forth from your own righteouſneſs, to reſt ſolely and only upon the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, if ever you mean to have comfort in this world, and in the world to come.

You will ſay peradventure, this is the way to deſtroy all righteouſneſs and obedience whatſoever; what, a man never a jot the better, though he be ever ſo zealous for God, although his eye and aim be after God in his zeal: to what purpoſe ſerves all this then, will you ſay?

I anſwer, The world is grown to a miſerable paſs, that obedience, zeal, and ſeeking after God, muſt be of no uſe at all, except a man himſelf be a gainer by his obedience; it is now, as it was in the time of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* iv. every one will be ready to cry out; *Who will ſhew us any good?* this is the common out-cry in the world; if any thing in the world be propoſed to men to be done, they anſwer, but what ſhall I get by it? That is the next word preſently: am I put upon ſuch, and ſuch an employment, ſaith one; but what ſhall I gain by it? As in thoſe offices of employment that carry about with them a great deal of labour and expence of time, and bring no profit in to the perſon in the office; every man will be ready to ſhun ſuch an office, nay ready to buy out ſuch employment; this is the caſe of the world, in things appertaining unto God: what doth the law call me out unto ſuch duties and employments, ſuch zeal and fervency, to be hot in theſe ſervices and duties, and to have mine eye upon God in the performance

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performance of them, and all this do me no good? I had as good ſit ſtill and do nothing. But there are ſome good common-wealths-men indeed, who you know have in reſpect of others' proſperity, put themſelves to trouble and charge, and be ſo far from getting, that they ſhall be loſers by their office; and yet for the common-wealth's good, they will willingly put themſelves on, when they are called out to ſuch employments: and I muſt tell you, except you mind chiefly, that all the duties you perform, are for other ends and purpoſes, than your own preferment, and to benefit yourſelf thereby; namely, the ſetting forth the praiſe of the glory of God's free-grace, and the ſerving your generation in which you live, and the ſtudy of good works, becauſe they are profitable to men; I ſay, except you will fall upon the performance of duties, for the common good and benefit, without having any ſuch conceits as what ſhall accrue to you thereby; you are not perſons yet come to have that common ſpirit, and dead to the old ſpirit, as becomes Chriſtians.

I muſt tell you, and that freely, there is not any duty you perform, when you have attained the higheſt pitch, that hath any prevalency, and availableneſs to produce any, though the leaſt good to yourſelves*; I ſay it again, there is nothing

* The Doctor's meaning is not, that no good is enjoyed in a way of duty; for, in the former diſcourſe on this text, he not only obſerves, that our righteouſneſs is uſeful, to manifeſt our thankfulneſs to God, and by it we ſerve our generation; but it is the ordinance of God, wherein he hath appointed us to meet with him, and wherein he will make good the things he

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thing you can do, from whence you ought to expect any gain unto yourſelves by doing: you ought not to ſeek to find in what you do, nor to think to bring Chriſt to yourſelves by doing; *You are not your own*, ſaith the apoſtle, *you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your bodies, and ſpirits:* Chriſt hath redeemed us, *that we ſhould not henceforth live to ourſelves, but live to him that died for us.*

The ſcripture is marvellous plentiful in this, that no believer for whom Chriſt died, ſhould have the leaſt thought in his heart of promoting or advancing himſelf, or any end of his own by doing what he doth: and though, as people may think, here is a marvellous diſcouragement to perſons, to do what God calls them to do, when they ſhall have nothing for it; I anſwer, when there is a ſpirit of ingenuity (as you know there is even in the world) they ſhall be induſtrious to

has before promiſed; and accordingly he pours out himſelf in grace and love, according to his promiſe: but the ſenſe is, that there is no virtue and efficacy in any duty performed to procure any good thing for us, or to intitle us to it; nor ſhould we do any with this view, or expect any on ſuch an account; but ſhould perform duty without mercenary and ſelfiſh views, purely from a ſpirit of ingenuity, from a principle of love and gratitude; knowing that all good things for time and eternity are already provided in Chriſt, and are or will be beſtowed on us, through him, and for his ſake; and not on account of any duty of ours, which ought not to be put in the room of Chriſt, and made an idol of; which is the Doctor's view, in theſe and other expreſſions of the like nature. See *Chauncy's Neonomianiſm Unmaſked*, part 2. p. 256, 290, 291, *&c.* a book worthy to be read by both the friends and foes of Dr. *Criſp;* being a vindication of theſe diſcourſes of his throughout, from the falſhood, miſrepreſentations, calumnies, and objections of D. W. in his *Goſpel-truth Stated*, &c.

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glorify God, and do good to men, as if they did it for themſelves; they ſhall do as much for good already beſtowed, as if they were to procure it by their own doing.

Secondly, I anſwer, There can be no diſcouragement at all unto the performance of any thing God calls for at your hands, though you get nothing in the world by what you do; I ſay, there is no diſcouragement, becauſe you cannot propoſe or intend to yourſelves any poſſible gain by duty; but that, whatever it is, that is a ſpur and encouragement unto it, is already freely and graciouſly provided for you to your hand; that all your induſtry could not compaſs and bring in, either ſo certainly or ſo plentifully as the very grace of God, before the performance of any duty, hath provided and eſtabliſhed that good for you.

When you fall upon humiliation, faſting, prayer, weeping, and ſelf-denial, what do you look for? In the diverſity of judgment, ſaith one, I get this by it, prevention of many great evils hanging over my head; another ſaith, peace of conſcience, joy in the Holy Ghoſt, aſſurance of the pardon of ſin, and of reconciliation with God; theſe things would I get by attending upon ordinances, by ſerving God day and night in that way he calls me out unto: I tell you plainly, there is none of all theſe things that you do, that conduce a jot towards the obtaining of any of theſe ends you propoſe to yourſelves; all you do gets not a jot; nay doth not concur in it.

You will ſay then, we had as good ſit ſtill, as good

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good never a whit as never the better: he that works all day, and gets nothing more than he had in the morning, had as good ſit ſtill, and do nothing.

I anſwer, Let me tell you, the prevention of evil, if there be reality of evil in it, and the obtaining of good, if there be a reality of good, peace of conſcience, joy in the Holy Ghoſt, pardon of ſin, infallibility of miſcarriage, the light of the countenance of God; all theſe, I ſay, which you aim at, when you are encouraged to duty, are provided abundantly for you, and eſtabliſhed firmly upon you, by the mere grace of God in Chriſt, before ever you perform any thing whatſoever; to what purpoſe do men propoſe ends to themſelves, which ends are accompliſhed before their propoſition? Hath God ſettled all things pertaining to life and godlineſs in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, upon you for his own ſake, and ſettled them everlaſtingly and unchangeably upon you; that heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, before a tittle of the grant of God, made freely for his own ſake, ſhall paſs? I ſay, hath he ſettled all things, ſo that there can come nothing to make them more ſecure, than the grant of God himſelf hath made them? To what purpoſe then do we propoſe to ourſelves, the gaining of that to ourſelves by our labour and induſtry, that is already become our own before we labour a jot? There are ſome children in the world, I know, that are very vigilant and very obſerving of their parents; and their end and aim is, that by ſuch compliance their

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their fathers may ſettle a good inheritance upon them; but, ſuppoſe a child hath manifeſted to it, that his father hath already paſſed over all his goods and land to him; and hath made a firm deed of conveyance, and cannot call it back, or in; he hath paſſed over ſo much, and ſo firmly, he is not able to add to that, that is paſſed over before-hand; will ſuch a child propoſe to himſelf, in his obedience and obſervance, the obtaining of that good his father hath already paſſed? He knows that it is paſſed already, and cannot be by any thing he doth firmer and ſtronger; he ſerves not now to get his father's lands, but he ſerves to honor his father that ſo freely hath ſettled his land upon him. So I ſay of believers, that have the temper of Chriſt's true bred children indeed; they, in the goſpel of Chriſt, find all things that appertain to life and godlineſs; they find them all ſo paſſed over by God's goodneſs and free-grace to them, that the lions ſhall want, and ſuffer hunger, before they ſhall lack any thing that is good: muſt they now labour to gain theſe things as if they were in agitation, and as if they were yet referred to their good or evil walking; that as they ſhall walk, ſo they ſhall ſpeed? This is to argue, that God is yet to determine with himſelf, how to diſpoſe of the good things that he will beſtow upon his people, and that he gives good things according to their good or evil carriage;* and ſo the goodneſs of God to his people muſt depend upon their goodneſs to him; and that as

[* Ezek. xxxvi. 32]

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men's works will prevail with God, ſo God will pour out his bounty unto them.

But, without reſpect to good or evil, as I ſaid before, the Lord hath everlaſtingly eſtabliſhed all that ever he meant to do; and no more will he do to the end of the world to any people he hath choſen in his Son. The Lord in Chriſt from everlaſting hath ſet down peremptorily what he will* do for you; and there are no intervening acts and carriages of yours that make any alteration in him at all to croſs out what he hath written, and to put in what he had left out; he doth nothing to his people upon conditions in them, as if he referred himſelf ſtill to thoſe conditions, and ſuſpended what he meant to do to them, till he perceived how they would carry themſelves to him.

All that I aim at is this, to let people know that it is not a vain thing to yield due obedience to any thing that God requires; though the Lord intend not, that by our obedience, we ſhall gain ſomething, which in caſe of our failing, we ſhall miſcarry of: I ſay, the Lord hath firmly eſtabliſhed upon his own people every thing that concerns their peace, comfort, and good, ſimply and merely for his ſake, without reſpect or regard to any thing they perform; that they are to do, they are not to do it with any eye to their own advantage, that being already perfectly completed to their hands before they do any thing: but ſimply with an eye to glorify God, and to ſerve their generation, and therein to ſerve the Lord, and ſet

[* Eccl. iii. 14, 15.—Jam. i. 17.]

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forth the praiſe of the glory of his grace that hath done ſo abundantly for them. Oh! that men were but ſo far enlightened, to behold how graciouſly the Lord hath provided for them; that he doth not now leave himſelf in a kind of ſuſpence* to deal well or ill with them, as they ſhould carry themſelves well or ill to him.

I know, the contrary to this riſes in the hearts of men that have not yet received the light of the glorious goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt; having this conceit, as if all the carriages of God to men, were according to their carriage to him; but here is no ſuch thing, this is but the eſtabliſhing of man's own righteouſneſs to expect the dealings of God to him, as he himſelf deals with God, and that therefore, he will be righteous, that he may be happy. Oh! I beſeech you, enter ſeriouſly into your own thoughts, and conſider, whether or no this be not to bring back again the covenant of works, even to believers; namely, that it ſhall fare well or ill with them, as they obey, or diſobey, the Lord God. The apoſtle in this chapter, verſe 5. doth expreſsly tell us what the covenant of works was; *Moſes deſcribes the righteouſneſs of the law thus, He that doth theſe things ſhall even live in them;* I pray mark it well, this is the righteouſneſs of the law, that he himſelf, in the next verſe, oppoſes to the righteouſneſs of God, that he calls the righteouſneſs of faith: *Moſes deſcribes the righteouſneſs of the law thus, He that doth theſe things ſhall even live in them: but the*

[* Job xxiii. 13.—Mal. iii. 6.]

righteouſneſs

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righteouſneſs of faith ſpeaks on this wiſe; Say not in thine heart, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven? That is, to bring Chriſt from above; or, who will deſcend into the deep? That is, to bring Chriſt up again from the dead; but what ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy heart, and in thy mouth, this is the word of faith that we preach. I ſay, the covenant of works ſtands upon theſe terms, So much doing, ſo much life; on the other ſide, *(Gal.* iii. 10.) *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them.* Here is the other branch of the covenant of works, ſo far as I fail in doing, ſo far muſt I be under the curſe. Now you can look for no better than wrath and vengeance from heaven, ſo long as you run on in theſe principles, and make them the foundation of your good; ſo far you make yourſelves liable to the covenant of works; no more good, comfort, peace, or reſt, but as you can do this, and that. What is this elſe, but, *Do this and live?*

I beſeech you to enter into your own hearts concerning this particular. When you yield obedience to God, you come to church, go to prayer, and fall to faſting, weeping, mourning, ſelf-denial, keeping the ſabbath, and dealing righteouſly, honeſtly, and juſtly with men; what is it you aim at in all this? That God may do you good, that he may be gracious and loving to you, that he may ſpeak peace to your ſpirits; then, it neceſſarily follows, that life is that in your eye that puts you upon that which you do, and ſo you do, that you may live; this is the righteouſneſs of the law,

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law, that righteouſneſs which is oppoſed to the righteouſneſs of faith. Now, know, that there is no ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God, while there is an eſtabliſhing of the righteouſneſs of the law of *Moſes;* namely, to do righteouſneſs that you may live; to refrain from evil, to the end you may not be curſed: he that propoſeth curſing or life, curſing if he do not do, or life if he do the will of God; he that propoſeth this, is *under the law, and not under grace.*

Chriſt, as you hear in the next verſe, *is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believes.* What is that? He is the end of the curſe of the law; he is the end of the life of the law; there is no curſe to be pronounced on a believer, when he breaks the law; there is no life to be expected by the believer upon his obedience to it; Chriſt is the end of the life, and curſe of the law; *He himſelf being made a curſe for us, as it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* Secondly, *Our life is hid with God in Chriſt:* he is the life, no life but in the Son; *He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son, hath not life,* ſaith the apoſtle. All this argues plainly, that all that life that is to be expected, whether it be life itſelf, or the conducing of things that appertain unto the comforts of it; all this is to be expected from the Son of God, and not from any obedience to the law. If thou, at any time, read a curſe to thyſelf, upon any tranſgreſſion of the law, and dareſt receive it againſt thyſelf, in reſpect of that tranſgreſſion, Chriſt is not the end of the law

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law to thee; namely, thy ſoul takes not Chriſt as the full curſe of the law, taking it all away, that otherwiſe the law would pronounce and execute upon thy perſon.

Beloved, I need not apologize; you know what the apoſtle ſpeaks, (2 *Cor.* v. 19.) *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them: and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation;* upon which (ſaith the apoſtle) *we are the ambaſſadors for Chriſt, beſeeching you, in Chriſt's ſtead, to be reconciled unto God.* I think I need not make an apology; he that is a miniſter of the goſpel ought to declare and proclaim this reconciliation to you, by God's own Son Jeſus Chriſt, peace through him, and atonement through his blood alone. Either we are the miniſters and meſſengers of Chriſt, or the miniſters of *Moſes*; we are either the miniſters of the covenant of works, or the meſſengers of the covenant of grace: ſo far as we urge upon you, as you do, you ſhall live, and as you do evil, you ſhall be accurſed; ſo far we are the miniſters of the covenant of works. But, when we come and ſay, that *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf;* that is, if we ſay, that Chriſt bare the curſe, and that you need not fear it, though you fall into ſin; you may be ſure that God hath reconciled you ſo in his Son, that your falls (being believers) ſhall not break peace between God and you; this peace is everlaſting, it is unchangeable; God is not a friend to-day with his people, and falls out with them to-morrow; *whom he loves, he loves*

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loves to the end; now this is our buſineſs to draw people unto Chriſt.

And we may do ſome good to let you ſee what advantage there is in Chriſt for you; for thereby you may be induced not to eſtabliſh your own righteouſneſs againſt him, and his. We ſhall ſin every day; in many things we ſin all; but the buſineſs we are to do, is this, to let you know, that though there be ſins committed, yet there is no peace broken; becauſe the breach of peace is ſatisfied in Chriſt; there is a reparation of the damage before the ſin itſelf be committed: Chriſt had in his eye, and ſo had the Father too, all the damages that ſhould fall out to the end of the world, by his own people; and he did not pay a price for ſome that were preſent only, but he paid the damages of all that ſhould come after, from the time of his ſuffering, to the end of the world; he paid the uttermoſt farthing for every one at once: though, it may be, one ſin is committed to-day, another is committed to-morrow, and the other the third day; God hath reconciled himſelf to you in Chriſt, for this ſin committed to-day and that which will be to-morrow, and ſo for all the reſt to the end of your lives, they are paid for already; this is that which will make up the peace of a believer; *The God of hope will fill us with all joy and peace in believing.* That is worth obſervation, beloved, the joy of a perſon can never be full, the peace of a man can never be complete, as long as there is ſuſpicion; there will be quarrelling again. What ſaith the ſoul? I ſin now, and ſhall

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ſhall to-morrow; and, when I ſin, God will fall out with me, be angry with me, and turn away from me; I ſay, as long as there is ſuch ſuſpicion, there will never be fulneſs of peace and joy. Hence it is, that perſons, till they came to receive the goſpel of Chriſt, were, through fear of death and wrath, ſubject to bondage all their life long; but, when they come to have this peace that Chriſt hath purchaſed, he having made an atonement, and given reſt, in that he hath paid all the old ſcores at once; then they may perceive, though there be this ſin committed, yet, notwithſtanding, God will not now fall out again with them; for he had an eye upon all theſe ſins, when Chriſt ſuffered, and took full ſatisfaction of his Son for this very ſin; now though I ſin to-day, God took full ſatisfaction of his Son for the ſins of this day; nay, more, he hath acknowledged ſatisfaction for them all; *He beheld the travail of his ſoul, and was ſatisfied*, for that which is to come, as well as that which is paſt; God, in Chriſt, hath given a full diſcharge.

Look upon the account, you ſhall find that Chriſt paid and reckoned not only for ſins paſt and preſent, but for ſins committed to the end of days. Therefore, in *Dan.* ix. 24. you ſhall find this excellent prophecy, *Yet ſeventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city:* here, by ſeventy weeks he propheſies of the diſtance between the time in which he ſpake, and the time wherein Chriſt ſhould ſuffer; and what ſhould he ſuffer for? *For the finiſhing tranſgreſſion, and for the putting an end to ſin; and for the making reconciliation,*

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on, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Mark, when these seventy weeks are ended, Christ is come, then there is a finishing of transgression: there is a great deal of weight in the very word, the *finishing of transgression:* when is a thing finished? When all is done, and nothing more needs to be done or added to it. This church was finished, when the lead was laid, and the windows glazed, and no workman had any thing more to do: now the time of Christ's suffering was the time of finishing transgression; as much as to say, Christ made an end of sin; that is, God had no more in the world to reckon with persons for sins, after Christ in that suffering of his, had paid the full price of every transgression. Beloved, if God come to reckon now with believers for sin, either he must ask something of them, or not; if not, why are they troubled? Why must they come under the rod, as it were, to make up that which is not yet paid? How doth Christ then perfect for ever them that are sanctified? And how are they saved to the uttermost, that come to God by him? When men are saved to the utmost, there needs no more to be done; if so, you must know, that God cannot bring a new reckoning. There is not such dishonesty in any honest man in the world; he that hath taken all the debt of a surety, and given acquittance under his hand, will not come upon the principal again, a poor beggar, and tell him, "I must have something of you;" the poor man will answer him, "Sir, you have received sufficient satisfaction already of my surety;"

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ty;" he is not an honeſt man that will aſk more. Chriſt is the ſurety of a better covenant; God took Chriſt's bond, and he paid it; and, as he took his pay, when he received it, he acknowledged he had received ſatisfaction, *Iſa.* liii. 11. *He beheld the travail of his ſoul, and was ſatisfied:* the travail of Chriſt gave the Father ſuch ſatisfaction, that he acknowledged he was ſatisfied in it; why, therefore, ſhould he come upon you again? And if God will not come upon you again, what need you fear? It is true, as ſin is contrary to the nature of God, ſo we ought with all reverence to make uſe of the help of the Spirit to oppoſe all ſin whatſoever; but for any hurt* which ſuch ſins ſhall do to us, it is not poſſible; for Chriſt hath made ſatisfaction; *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our iniquities, and the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him:* did God wound Chriſt for ſin? If he did, it was to ſome purpoſe, or to none; if it were to purpoſe, then it pleaſed the Father to wound him, that thoſe that were to be wounded might not be wounded: and hath Chriſt ſaved his people from wounding, then what need we fear that we ſhall be wounded for our tranſgreſſions?

But if we commit ſin, God will puniſh us.

I anſwer, This is to make the ſufferings of Chriſt of none effect; for, if he had not ſuffered, you could but be wounded; but if he was wounded

* By hurt is meant, the hurt of puniſhment, penal evil, which Chriſt has bore and took away from his people; ſo that they ſhall never be affected with it, he having fully ſatisfied for their ſins.

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for you, why do you disparage his sufferings, by this false jealousy and suspicion of yours? and, besides, you will never rest in peace all the days of your life, till you go out of yourselves to the Lord Christ, and see fulness in him, and such fulness and perfection in him, that there needs no addition to what he hath done; *In him* (saith the apostle) *dwells the fullness of the God-head bodily*, and *we are complete in him*; and is it so? There is no fear then, that God should look upon you as abominable, loathsome things, any longer: there is inconsistency between a lovely person, and an ugly loathsome one; you are complete in Christ; now, being complete in him, you are lovely in the sight of the Father: in *Ezek.* xvi. the prophet tells us, *And thy beauty became perfect through my comeliness that I put upon thee.* Here is a person in blood, in a loathsome condition; but, for all this, as loathsome as he is in himself, and in his own nature; yet here is perfection of beauty, and that through the comeliness of Christ: now can the Lord abhor that which hath perfection of comeliness in it? Whosoever is in Christ, hath all the comeliness of Christ upon him; now as you look out of yourselves, and your filthiness, and look upon yourselves as you are in him; so you shall have not only rest and peace, but joy, and joy unspeakable and glorious, as in *Isa.* xxxv. 10. an excellent place; *The ransomed of the Lord shall return to* Sion *with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy, and gladness; and sorrow, and sighing shall flee away.*

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Some interpret these words of the glory in heaven; but it is returning to *Sion*, and not returning to heaven; *Sion* is the church of God upon earth; they return to *Sion*, that is, they return to Christ in his church upon earth; they shall return with songs, and everlasting joy; and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is not impossible, you will say; but you know many of the people of the Lord Jesus, that walk sadly and disconsolately, not having this joy and gladness.

I answer, There is nothing hinders the joy of God's people, bur their sins; these, as they conceive, stand as a separation between God and them; oh! they stand as a cooling card in all their joys and mirth; but when they return to *Sion*, they shall rejoyce in that they shall see, that the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God hath cleansed them from all sin; in that the lamb of God hath taken away all their sins; the scape-goat having carried them away into the land of forgetfulness; in that all their transgressions are blotted out as a cloud, and God will remember their sins no more; in that they are all fair, having no spot before the Lord in them: when they shall come, by the sight of the glory of the gospel, and the light thereof, to behold this estate that Christ hath brought them into; then all matter of sorrow and sighing shall flie away and the bitterness of it shall be taken away; and then that which was the occasion of that bitterness shall vanish too.

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I do not ſay, that he is no believer that hath not this perfectly; far be it from me to ſay ſo; there are that are believers that are weak; and there are believers that are ſtrong in faith. The more the light and glory of the goſpel ſhines in the true intention of God to his people; the more ſhall they return to their reſt, the more ſhall they have joy and gladneſs.

Why then, may not a believer ſay as *David* did, *The Lord hath been very bountiful to me, that I may return to my reſt;* God hath done every thing in Chriſt, and taken away all things that can diſturb my peace and comfort.

SERMON XI.

God remembers not our Sins.

ISAIAH xliii. 25.

I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.

TO have an evangeliſt, a day-ſtar, to be viſited in lightſome times, though it be a matter of great grace; yet is it not cauſe of ſo great admiration, as to have the ſun ſhining in a dark

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night is matter of wonder; and yet there was a ſpiritual eye among the *Jews*, that was able to ſee (in their darkeſt days) a glorious ſun in their firmament; this eye was this evangeliſt *Iſaiah*. I rather call him an evangeliſt than a prophet, for his bringing glad tidings of good things, tidings of exceeding great joy. The apoſtle *Paul* himſelf, the great doctor of the Gentiles, and the main exalter of Chriſt and the grace of God in him, goes not beyond this evangeliſt; ſpeaking ſo fully, clearly, and ſweetly of the freeneſs of God's love, even while perſons are in the loweſt and worſt of conditions.

Beſides all other expreſſions of his, this very text that I have read unto you is enough to make him an evangeliſt indeed; for here he evangelizes, or preaches the gladdeſt tidings that ever could come to the ſons of men; for herein he proclaims liberty to the captives, and binds up the broken-hearted. This very expreſſion of his, is one of the greateſt cauſes, that *the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return to* Sion *with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; and that they do obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing fly away;* as the ſame prophet hath it in chap. xxxv. 10.

Now that we may ſee more fully, the ſweetneſs of marrow, and of wine well refined on the lees, contained in this text; it will be of very great importance and concern, to underſtand clearly and fully to whom, or of whom, the Lord by this prophet ſpeaks theſe words. It is true, a pardon is a welcome thing to a condemned malefactor; but a pardon

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a pardon for this man, when another that goes to execution hath none, is ſo far from being a comfort to him that ſuffers, that it doth but augment his miſery and torment.

If the Lord for his own ſake blots out the iniquity of ſuch and ſuch, and not the iniquity of others, it is but the augmentation of the miſery of that perſon that hath no ſhare in it.

In verſe 4. the Lord mentions *Jacob* indeed, but, in the ſequel, he makes it appear, that he intends not *Jacob* according to the fleſh, but after the ſpirit; for this *Jacob* and *Iſrael* are that company and aſſembly of people, that are brought together from the ends of the earth; from the eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, as we have it expreſſed in verſe 5, 6. But, beloved, that you may ſee plainly who this *Jacob* and *Iſrael* are, obſerve but one expreſſion in verſe 7. *Thou that art called by my name*, ſaith the Lord; theſe are the perſons whoſe iniquities the Lord blots out; what name is that? The name of *The Lord thy Saviour*, verſe 11. Now there is no people in the world, nor the *Jews* themſelves; that had ſo plain a name of their Saviour upon them, as we have that are Gentiles, that are Chriſtians; we have the true name of Chriſt a Saviour upon us, Chriſtians from Chriſt.

And leaſt people ſhould think, that when the Lord proclaims this grace in the text, of blotting out iniquity and tranſgreſſion, he looks for ſome qualifications and diſpoſitions, that may be amiable to win ſo much grace from him; do but obſerve, I pray, (and it is very obſervable indeed). the

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the two or three verſes before my text; you ſhall ſee plainly how careful the Lord is to take off all ſuch conceits from men, all imagination of any ſuch expectation. There muſt be firſt graciouſneſs, they muſt be firſt well qualified, and then their iniquities ſhall be blotted out, ſo might ſome think; mark how the Lord takes it off; for in theſe two verſes, he draws to the very life the qualifications and conditions of thoſe, whoſe iniquities he blots out; mark them well, *Thou haſt not called upon me; thou haſt been weary of me; thou haſt bought me no ſweet cane with money, neither haſt thou filled me with the fat of thy ſacrifices; thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins; thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities:* and then upon theſe words follows the text; *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own ſake; and will not remember thy ſins.* Mark, the words [*thy tranſgreſſions*] have reference to the perſons ſpoken of before, *that haſt not called upon me; thy tranſgreſſions, that haſt been weary of me; thy tranſgreſſions that haſt wearied me; and thy tranſgreſſions, that haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins.*

So that the point from hence is this; *That the Lord, for his own ſake, blots out the tranſgreſſions, and remembers not the ſins, even of thoſe that have not called upon him, that have been weary of him, and wearied him, and made him ſerve with their tranſgreſſions.*

I make no queſtion, but that this doctrine, I have laid down, will be received of all that will but receive clear ſcripture; I have not added one tittle in it more than is expreſſed in the words themſelves;

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themſelves; and therefore I ſhall be the more bold to build upon ſuch a rock as this is.

That we may the better come to the words, or rather, to our comfort in them, we have theſe particulars very obſervable.

Firſt, The grace held out to theſe perſons; and that is expreſſed by two phraſes. *Firſt*, The *Lord blots out thy tranſgreſſions.* Secondly, *will not remember thy ſins.*

Secondly, Beſides the grace held forth, let us conſider the original or fountain from whence it ſprings; it is *I, even I*, ſaith the Lord, *the Lord of hoſts, the God of* Iſrael, *thy Saviour*; for ſo you have it expreſſed all along the chapter.

Thirdly, You may conſider here the motive that prevails with God, to extend this grace that he ſhews to his people, and that is a remarkable paſſage; the motive is not in, nor from the creature; it hath its ſpring and riſe immediately from himſelf alone; *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions; for mine own ſake I do it.*

Finally, you may conſider to whom this grace is extended; that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions, ſaith the text, and will not remember thy ſins; that is, to thoſe perſons mentioned before, of which I have ſpoken, that had wearied him with their ſins; of theſe briefly.

Firſt, Concerning the grace that the Lord is pleaſed to hold forth to his people here, namely, *The blotting out their tranſgreſſions and not remembering their ſins. Firſt*, let us conſider what it is for the Lord to blot out tranſgreſſions; it is an uſual phraſe

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phraſe in the ſcripture, and imports much comfort in it; it is an alluſion, or an allegorical expreſſion; wherein the Lord is pleaſed to hold forth his love to man, after the manner of men; to ſet forth his carriage to men, according to theirs one to another. It is a phraſe borowed from the practice of men, that keep their debt-books, wherein they enter, and record the ſeveral debts men owe them; that ſo, for the better helping of their memory, they may find what is due, and know what to demand and call for; I ſay, the Lord here ſpeaking of *blotting out of tranſgreſſions*, hath reference to ſuch debt-books, wherein he hath recorded the ſeveral debts, or ſins, which he enters as men commit them; now the blotting out is nothing elſe, but that, whereas there were ſuch and ſuch tranſgreſſions in the record of God, he draws a blot over them. And that he here hath reference to ſuch kind of dealing, in blotting out tranſgreſſions, you may ſee clearly manifeſted unto you, in *Col.* ii. 14. where this phraſe of blotting out, is explained: *You being dead in your ſins, hath he quickened, together with Chriſt, having forgiven you all treſpaſſes;* now mark what follows, *blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances which was againſt us, and was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs:* what *the hand writing of ordinances* there is, you may plainly perceive by the words going before, namely, *All our treſpaſſes, and all our ſins.* Now the taking away of ſin, is called a *blotting it out*, and expreſſed thus; *The blotting out of the hand-writing that was againſt us,* becauſe

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becauſe they were, as it were, written down; but the Lord hath razed and blotted them out. You are not to conceive that there are really ſuch things with God, that he did indeed keep a book, and enter down in it all the ſeveral actions of men, and ſo calling men to account, will open it, and will read out the ſeveral things there written; but the phraſe is only an alluſion ſpoken for our better capacity.

And, for this cauſe, you ſhall find the ſcripture frequently makes mention of ſuch books God hath. When the ſeventy diſciples came to Chriſt, rejoicing that the devils were made ſubject unto them, he replies, *Rejoice not that the devils are made ſubject unto you, but rejoice, rather, that your names are written in the book of life.* Here is a book, and the names of the diſciples written in it; but, if you will mark *Rev.* xx. 12. you ſhall find, there is not only the book of life, but other books beſides, out of which the dead, both ſmall and great, were judged. according to their works that they had done; as if he had ſaid, beſides the book of life, there is the book of works, wherein the ſeveral actions of men are recorded, by which, at the great day, men are to be judged as they are found in them; according to the ſeveral debts that are therein, they are to receive their ſentence. Mark now, for the better apprehenſion of our weak capacity, the Lord hath taken up ſuch a kind of illuſtration of his dealing with men; namely, by recording our debts in books; yet, he tells us for our comfort, that, though there be ſuch books, we need

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need not fear; though they ſhall be opened, yet whatſoever was written in them, in reference to us, is all croſſed and blotted out; and, when we come to account, there ſhall be nothing reckoned unto us, as a fault.*

For the better illuſtration of this, that what comes after may be the clearer, you muſt underſtand, that, though it be true in the ſucceſſion of ages, the ſeveral members of Chriſt do ſeverally day after day commit now ſome, then more, and afterwards more tranſgreſſions; though this be actually done in ſucceſſion of time, yet the all-ſeeing eye of the Lord looks over† all, that ever ſhould be done, from all eternity; and then, as it were with himſelf, writes down the ſeveral actions and tranſgreſſions of men, that afterwards ſhould be committed; he regiſters them at firſt with himſelf, and this is all the book that God keeps, and all the entries of actions with him. Now, whereas the Lord in his eternal fore-ſight took notice of every action that you and I have done, do, or ſhall do hereafter; he alſo took notice of the nature and quality of ſuch actions; yet, when he had done, he drew a croſs over them all: for though he ſaw theſe things thus done, yet he took a courſe that he would be another way ſatisfied for every thing he could demand in reſpect of them; and ſo they ſhould remain no longer upon the heads of thoſe perſons. As for example, Suppoſe a man owes, upon a bill of parcels, an hundred pounds; all theſe parcels are written in a book under his

[* Jude, 24.——† Pſalm cxlvii. 5—John xxi. 17.]

name

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name upon his head; after a time a ſurety comes and takes all this debt, and enters it upon his own head, under his own name, he being an able man: upon this, the creditor is pleaſed to take him for his debtor, and ſo tranſcribes every parcel of the debt, from the head of the principal debtor, unto the head of this ſurety. Now, after all theſe parcels are entered to the head of the ſurety, by-and-by a croſs is drawn over the firſt head, whoſe debt it was before, until it was brought over unto the ſurety: this is the *blotting out of tranſgreſſion*, which the Lord here ſpeaks of: and the ſenſe of it is no more but this, though it is true, I know it well enough what thou haſt done, and all thou haſt done againſt me, how many and how great tranſgreſſions thou haſt committed, and hereafter ſhall commit; though they be all open before me; though thou art the doer of all theſe, and I know it; *yet*, ſaith the Lord, *I will blot out all:* that is, there is not any one of all theſe to be reckoned for upon thy head; but I have paſſed them all upon another's, and he hath made to me, and I have acknowledged, full ſatisfaction: I have no more to ſay to thee.

Here, then, is the ſum of this grant of the free grace of God, *the blotting out of tranſgreſſion*; you know, beloved, the uſe of writing debts in a book, namely, that a creditor may turn over at pleaſure or leiſure to them; and ſo, when he looks there, he may find what every perſon owes, and, at diſcretion, may take the ground-work of his action that he lays againſt a perſon; and upon this action arreſt-

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arreſt him, and lay him up in priſon, till he pays the debt: and, likewiſe, you know what the end of this *blotting out* too is; namely, that when men come to look over their books, they may ſkip over what was written; and, when the book is looked over, no notice ſhall be taken of ſuch a man's name, who, though he was entered in it, yet all is blotted out again; and imports to us thus much, to the thing in hand, that though the Lord, according to the uſual manner of taking notice of actions againſt men, hath his time when he will take notice of theſe debts, when he enters the debtor, when he will arreſt and clap him up for them; yet, when he ſhall look over his book, he ſhall take no notice of ſuch perſons whoſe parcels are croſſed out. Therefore, in *Jer.* l. 20. ſee how the prophet alludes to this expreſſion, and how he explains the words *blotting out of tranſgreſſion: In thoſe days, and at that time, ſaith the Lord, ſhall the iniquities of* Iſrael *be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reſerve.* Here he ſeems to repreſent the Lord as one that begins to look over his books, to ſee what debts are owing unto him; as if he were making a ſearch: well, ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, though at ſuch a time the ſins of this people be ſought for, yet there ſhall be none; it is true, they were all entered into the knowledge of God from all eternity, yet there ſhall be none; that is, though they were entered, they are blotted out again; therefore, as it is in a debt-book, though there be never ſo many

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many parcels entered, entered ever ſo truly there, yet, when once that which was entered, is blotted out, there is no more debt, than if there had never been any; for all that was ever in, is blotted out. So, though the Lord be privy to what they do, and hath recorded them in his own thoughts; yet he himſelf draws a blot upon them, and makes them to be nothing; whereas before, till the blot was drawn over them, they were real debts.

And this he doth not ſimply in reſpect of forgiveneſs; in regard of us, it is true, it is a forgiveneſs; yet, in reſpect of him, it is not merely forgiveneſs: for the reaſon and ground of blotting out of iniquity, is, there is a ſecond head to which theſe debts are tranſlated from us, that ſhall pay them better than thoſe whoſe firſt they were; ſo that the debt being paid, God loſeth nothing; foraſmuch as that another hath paid all.

This is one of the moſt admirable pieces of grace, that thirſting ſouls can deſire; if they had all they could wiſh themſelves. Do but think ſeriouſly upon it; ſuppoſe a man is privy to himſelf of murder, felony, and treaſon, or what elſe you will; ſuppoſe he knows that it is known, and that there are many witneſſes to atteſt it; nay, ſuppoſe he knew it were done in the eye and face of the judge himſelf, that he ſaw with his own eyes what was done, and that, when all this is done, he ſhould be drawn to his trial; alas! in what perplexity of heart would this man be? How would he quake and tremble, and be even at his wits end? He knows it was publickly done, there is

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is no ſmothering of it, but that he muſt juſtly lie under condemnation for it; the witneſſes come in and ſwear point-blank againſt him; and yet ſuppoſe, after all pleadings, and bitter expectation of the ſentence, the judge himſelf ſhould ſtand up and ſay, I have made ſearch, and there is not one bill of indictment found againſt this man; there is not one action that may juſtly be laid againſt him; and I have nothing to ſay to him, or againſt him: how will this make the heart of ſuch a priſoner leap for joy, being ſo acquitted and diſmiſſed, and having no bill found againſt him! Juſt ſo is our caſe; we have committed murder, felony, treaſon, rebellion, and enmity, all that can be againſt the Lord; we did it in the face of God, that he knows it is done; but, when we come to trial, God himſelf brings in an *ignoramus*; he himſelf ſaith, Here is not one bill of indictment againſt him; there is nothing but what is blotted out; and the reaſon is, as I ſaid, becauſe he acknowledgeth that he hath received a ſatisfaction from his Son; *Deliver him, for I have found a ranſom*, Job. xxxiii. 24. So much for that phraſe, *I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions:* it followeth, *And will not remember thy ſins:* here is the *ignoramus* that God himſelf makes; though the fore-man of the grand-jury bring in an indictment; yet, ſaith God, I remember no ſuch matter: here is a plea againſt this and that man, (members of Chriſt, you muſt ſuppoſe them all this while) they are accounted for ſuch and ſuch ſinners

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ſinners and tranſgreſſors, but I remember no ſuch matter, ſaith the Lord.

But what is it for God not to remember the tranſgreſſions of men in this kind, will ſome ſay?

I anſwer, beloved, Here the Lord ſpeaks after the manner of men, as he did before; books, you know, are the regiſters of memory, or records for the help of memory rather: when a man comes to his book, to his bills and bonds, and there reads what ſuch and ſuch a man owes, he thereby remembers what debts are due unto him, and from whom; but if he comes to his book, and there can read nothing owing unto him from ſuch a perſon; he is ſaid not to remember it, ſo that memory itſelf fails; can this man now remember his debts that cannot find that he hath any ſuch, that cannot read them? If a man look over his debt-book, and finds there, that though ſuch debts were written, yet now they are ſo obliterated that no man can read them, and that this blotting was made not caſually, but upon conſideration of a ſufficient ſatisfaction; how then, can he remember theſe now as debts? Thus the Lord repreſents himſelf to us, he remembers not our ſins; that is, the tranſgreſſions of the members of Chriſt come not into the thoughts of God, ſo as now to think that ſuch and ſuch a man ſtands guilty before him of ſuch a tranſgreſſion; I ſay, the Lord hath not in his thought any ſuch thing concerning any member of Chriſt. Beloved, you ſhall find it a frequent expreſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, manifeſting the grace of God to his own people; namely,

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namely, *God doth not remember their ſins: David* in *Pſal.* xxv. 9. prays thus, *Lord, remember not the ſins of my youth:* but look into the covenant of grace, wherein God engages himſelf to be the God of his people; this is the cloſure and ſhutting up of it, in *Jer.* xxxi. 31. and ſo on; *In thoſe days, and at that time, will I make a covenant with the houſe of* Iſrael, *not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers; but this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with them,* &c. And then the ſhutting up of the new covenant is in theſe words, *Their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

So the apoſtle, *Heb.* viii. 12. repeats the ſelf-ſame thing, repeating the covenant word for word, and ends it with the ſame cloſure, *Your ſins and iniquities I will remember no more.* And in *Heb.* x. 16, 17. Though the apoſtle abridges the covenant, and leaves out many branches of it, yet he forgets not the laſt clauſe of it, *Their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

So it ſtands for a truth, the people of God are ſo received into the grace and favour of God, that God doth not, nay he will not remember their ſins any more from the time that they are become members of Chriſt, and actually in covenant with him; from that time for ever more, there is not once a bringing to remembrance with God any one of their tranſgreſſions.

But ſome will ſay, This ſeems to be ſtrange; what, God not remember the ſins of believers? Suppoſe he forgives them, yet he muſt remember them,

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them, ſeeing they are committed every day ſo clearly and conſpicuouſly in his ſight: how is it poſſible he ſhould not remember them?

I anſwer, beloved, Let fleſh and blood reaſon and ſay what it will, I aſk you this queſtion, is it the Lord himſelf that ſays, he doth not remember the ſins of his people? If he himſelf ſpeaks it, who art thou, O man, that dareſt queſtion whether he remembers them, or no? Shalt thou ſay, he remembers their ſins, when he himſelf ſaith, he will not remember them? The apoſtle *Paul* tells us, *No man knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God:* doth not the Spirit of God tell us this, that *he doth not remember their ſins?* And can any man know the things of God better than the Spirit? Thou ſayeſt that God remembers them, when he ſaith, he doth not remember them.

But ſome will be ready to ſay further, How can this poſſibly be, that God ſhould know every ſin that the believer commits, and the believer himſelf knows the ſins he commits, and yet God ſhould not remember them?

I anſwer, *Firſt*, Suppoſe I could not untie this knot, or reſolve this riddle to you; you muſt know, beloved, there are deep things of God, that none but he himſelf can dive into, that none but he is able to reſolve; yet, though it could not be reſolved, let God be true, and all the world be liars; let not the world's ſaying, God remembers the ſins of his people, prevail againſt his ſaying, *I will not remember their ſins:* let ſenſe,

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argument, reaſon, and all ſtoop to faith, even for the teſtimony of God's ſake alone, though none will ſpeak the ſame thing, but merely the voice of God himſelf.

But, *Secondly*, Let us ſee whether we can untie this knot or no: how is it poſſible that the Lord ſhould not remember their ſins, ſeeing they are ſo plain to him every moment? There is one word in the text, that is not much heeded, and it is that which muſt reſolve this great and difficult queſtion; and that is this, *I will not remember* your *ſins, I will not remember them as* your *ſins*, putting the emphaſis upon the word *your*; and will not remember *thy* ſins, or *your* ſins. It is moſt certainly true, God remembers all the actions that ever men have done, do, or ſhall do; he remembers the nature and quality of all actions as they are; he remembers ſuch actions, as done at ſuch times; and he knows they are thus and thus in the nature of them; and yet ſo it is, that *he remembers not* thy *tranſgreſſions*; that is, though he remembers the things thou haſt done, yet he doth not remember them as they are thine; he remembers the things, it is true, but not that they are thine; for he remembers perfectly that they are none of thine; he remembers whoſe they are, he himſelf hath paſſed them over, he decreed that they ſhould become the ſins of Chriſt; and when he paſſed them over to him, they ceaſed to be thine any longer.

You know that text in *Iſa.* liii. 6. *He hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*; and you know that place

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place in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He was made ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Now I aſk this queſtion, Whoſe are the ſins that believers commit? When Chriſt became their ſin, are they not his? and if they are his, are they any longer theirs, that did commit them? 2 *Cor.* v. 19. ſhews plainly, that the Lord reckons them no longer theirs, when he hath made them once to be Chriſt's; *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them;* as much as to ſay, I will never reckon them thine any more; I will never impute them to thee; all that I look for in reſpect of thy ſins, I look for at the hands of Chriſt; *for he was made ſin for us,* ſaith the text.

And whereas people think it ſtrange, for as much as believers themſelves do remember their ſins, that God ſhould not remember them; I anſwer, if any believers or members of Chriſt remember their ſins any otherwiſe than God remembers them, their memory fails them, and they are miſtaken in their remembrance; if when believers have ſinned, they have a conceit that their ſins ſhall be charged upon them; the truth is, they have other conceits of themſelves than God hath of them; but if they will remember their ſins, as he remembers them, they muſt remember them, and know them by the light of God's Spirit, that ſhall lead them into all truth. The Spirit of God will remember them of them indeed, and lay before them ſuch and ſuch actions, and tell them, that they have theſe pollutions in

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them, and will convince them of the abhorrency of them; but the ſame Spirit will remember them withal, that the *Lamb of God hath taken away all theſe ſins of theirs;* and that the ſcape-goat hath carried them away into a land of forgetfulneſs; thus, I ſay, the Holy Ghoſt, as it brings their ſins to their remembrance, ſo it will ſuggeſt to them alſo, to whom theſe ſins are ſent.

Beloved, it is a matter of admirable grace, full of wonder, yea, even of amazing conſolation, that a poor ſoul condemned by Satan, nay, it may be, by his own conſcience, ſhould at laſt hear the Lord ſpeak, and the laſt words of God himſelf to be this, *I remember no ſuch thing:* now if God himſelf doth not remember your tranſgreſſions, you that are the members of Chriſt, it is no matter who remembers them; he that ſhall be the judge of quick and dead at the laſt day, will not remember them; and therefore, as the apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, ſo you may ſay with comfort in your own ſpirits; *To me it is a very ſmall thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgement,* 1 Cor. iv. 3. beloved, he that hath ſaid it, will ſtand to it, he will never remember your ſins any more; tho' they be never ſo many, or never ſo great, he will never call one of them to remembrance: it may be in affliction, and when the rod of God is fallen upon thee, thy heart will be ready to raiſe ſuch thoughts as theſe in thee; *Now God will be even with me; now ſhall I ſmart for my tranſgreſſions;* but know this, that at that inſtant when God brings afflictions upon thee, he doth

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doth not remember any ſin of thine; they are not in his thoughts; for the text ſaith not only of the preſent inſtant, that God doth not remember them, but of the future alſo, nay, of the everlaſting future; *Your ſins, and your iniquities, I will remember no more.*

I beſeech you, conſider this one thing, you that think that God plagues and puniſhes you, being believers, for ſuch and ſuch ſins of yours, and ſay, doth he not now remember theſe ſins of mine? Doth he puniſh ſuch and ſuch ſins in others, and take vengeance for them, and doth he not remember them? Doth he uſe to do things hand over head? Doth he lay his rod and his ſcourge upon them, and never think of the cauſe of it? And if theſe afflictions be the judgment of God for theſe ſins, certainly God muſt remember them, and ſo know them as motives and provocations, to inflict ſuch vengeance upon them; and if he puniſhes them for them, certainly he now remembers them: and what of all this? Is it a truth that God hath ſpoken, *Your iniquities and your ſins will I remember no more?* Then, ſurely, whatſoever things befall the children of God, are not puniſhments for ſin, nor remembrances of ſin; the Lord muſt be true and faithful in his covenant; and therefore, if men ſhall cavil againſt this free-grace of God, yet let me requeſt this of you, let the evidence of the holy Ghoſt ſo prevail with your ſpirits, that if any creature in heaven or earth, men or angels, ſhall endeavour to contradict this, let them be accounted as they deſerve; let all give way

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way to this truth; if any thing in the world can make it appear to the contrary, then let it go away with it; but if the Spirit of God ſpeaks it ſo clearly, that nothing can be objected againſt it; let not any thing cauſe thee to live in ſo much darkneſs and uncomfortableneſs, as thou muſt do, till thou receive this grace of the Lord.

And ſo, beloved, I have done with the *ſecond* thing. There is one thing more very conſiderable, and that is what the motive is, that prevails with God, that thy ſins and iniquities ſhould be blotted out, and that he ſhould not remember them; what is it that moves him to do this? I find that the channel of mens hearts run uſually this way; Oh! When God beholds my mourning, weeping, and reformings, and knows I am returned unto him by true repentance, and ſeeth what moan I make, and what a pitiful wretch I am, when he beholds my groanings and my meltings; oh! this cannot but move him to pity me, and to pardon my ſins! Oh beloved! know the Lord hath other manner of motives to prevail with him, than all the rhetorick of miſery in the creature can poſſibly be to perſuade him to this grace; I ſay peremptorily, it is not all the ſighings, groanings, mournings, faſtings, prayers, and ſelf-denial; nor all the righteouſneſs that men can return to God, that can prevail with him, to blot out their ſins and to remember them no more; but the motive is this, *I, even I, for mine own ſake do this*; and the Holy Ghoſt frequently expreſſes it in ſuch terms as this, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 32. after he had laid

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laid down the covenant of grace, he concludes with this caution; *Be it known unto you, not for your ſakes do I this to you; be aſhamed and confounded for your own ways, O houſe of* Iſrael: mark it, there is nothing in the creature moves God to ſhew compaſſion upon him; but merely for his own ſake doth he this to his people.

But, how is it, for his own name ſake to do it? I anſwer, It imports two things; *firſt*, The Lord doth it for his own ſake, that is, he is ſolely moved to it, by and from himſelf; and there is no creature in the world doth ſo much as move him to it; I ſay, the Lord when he blots out the tranſgreſſions of his people, he is not ſo much as moved to it, and ſought unto for it; there is nothing in the creature to move God to it; but ſimply of his own mere motion he does it; and this the apoſtle expreſſes in abundant fulneſs, *Eph.* i. 9. where, (ſpeaking of redemption) he tells expreſly, that the Lord did all according to his own *good purpoſe that he had in himſelf.*

But, ſome will ſay, You will grant this, that Chriſt moved God to blot out tranſgreſſions.

To this I anſwer, That though Chriſt moved God to blot them out, yet this ſtands firm ſtill, that we do not move him to do it.

Secondly, I anſwer, when we ſay, that Chriſt moves God to blot out tranſgreſſion, I do not ſeparate him from Chriſt; *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*; what he doth in grace to the poor creature, he doth in Chriſt; and he doth nothing of grace to ſinners, abſolutely conſidered

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conſidered in himſelf, abſtractedly from Chriſt, but as in him.

But, *Thirdly*, take Chriſt for mediator, and as he is diſtinguiſhed from the Father, and then, I ſay, that he, as mediator, did not firſt move God to blot out tranſgreſſions; but the motion within himſelf, from eternity, was the root and fountain of all; yea, even of Chriſt himſelf as mediator; and from this fountain was he raiſed up to accompliſh theſe things that firſt were in his breaſt; for Chriſt is the mediator; that is, he is the mean between God and us, to compoſe this great thing of blotting out our tranſgreſſion. Now, know, that the means are raiſed up for the bringing about the thing intended; and in nature are after the thing intended as the end; the ſchool-men have a ſpeech, "The end of things is always the "firſt in intention, though it be laſt in execution;" if a man builds a houſe, he firſt propoſeth to himſelf to what purpoſe it is; it is to dwell in: the habitation is firſt in his thoughts, and then the ſtructure as a means is raiſed afterwards to that end; ſo the Lord ſits down, and conſults with himſelf, how he may ſhew himſelf in grace to the creature thus; The creature will ſin, *and I will blot out their tranſgreſſions*; but how ſhall it be done? Well, ſaith God, I will ſend Chriſt into the world; he ſhall be born of a woman, and die for their ſins, having them laid upon him, and ſhall purchaſe their redemption: now Chriſt is the means, he is made a mediator; but God's determination, concerning the blotting out of

tranſgreſſion,

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tranſgreſſion, was of his own motion, before there was ſuch a thing as Chriſt, I mean in both his natures; and Chriſt, therefore, came, becauſe God had determined in his own thoughts, that ſuch a thing ſhould be done by him.

Secondly, God doth this for his own ſake, not only of his own mere motion, but for his own end too, for himſelf. We are apt to think that he blots out our tranſgreſſions, that he might do good to us, that we might be made happy by it; it is true, the Lord blotted out tranſgreſſions that we might be happy, but yet this is but the ſubordinate end to him, and ſtands in ſubordination to a ſupreme and higher end; God aims at his own glory principally; he did not therefore blot out tranſgreſſions that we might be the better for it principally; but that he might attain the thing that concerned himſelf in it.

And, therefore, whereas the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks in the text of *blotting out tranſgreſſions for his own name ſake*, he adds theſe words to it, (fore-ſhewing that God aimed at himſelf more than any thing concerning the good of his creatures, 1 *Sam.* xii. 22.) *The Lord will not forſake his people for his great name ſake.* Joſh. vii. 9. *What wilt thou do unto thy great name*, if thy people ſhould ſin? he ſpeaking of it then in that buſineſs of the men of *Iſrael*'s falling before the men of *Ai*. The great argument of *Joſhua*, to prevail with God, was the great name of God. *Pſal.* lxxix. 9. *Help us, O Lord, for the glory of thy name, and deliver us, and purge away our ſins for thy name ſake:* the meaning

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ing is this; the Lord blots out tranſgreſſions for his own ſake, that is, he therefore blots them out that his own name and glory might be the more magnified and exalted in the world; ſo that for his own praiſe ſake, he doth the great things he doth. Therefore the apoſtle, in *Epheſ.* i. 6. ſpeaking of redemption, tells us, what the great end of it was, namely, *To the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

Now you ſee what it is for God to blot out tranſgreſſions for his own ſake; namely, that he might have the praiſe of the glory of his own grace in doing ſuch marvellous things as he doth; ſo that you run in a vain courſe to think that you move God by your importunity and humbling yourſelves before him; for he will not be moved with all theſe to blot out your tranſgreſſions; if ever, therefore, you would find a motive whereon to reſt indeed ſatisfied that God will and doth blot them out, run to this, the free thoughts of God, and the bowels in God himſelf (without regard to what is in you, or done by you, to move him to do it, or to provoke him not to do it) have put him upon this great work for you.

Look into *Rom.* ix. you ſhall there ſee, that in this buſineſs of love, and blotting out ſin, the Lord will therefore manifeſt himſelf in grace, while *Jacob* is in the womb, before ever he could ſigh and groan to him; he did it then that it might appear *not according to works, but according to the purpoſe of election*, that it might ſtand *not of works, but of grace:* and ſo, when ſouls partake of this grace

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grace of the blotting out of iniquity, they may cry out as the Pſalmiſt did in another caſe, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be the praiſe and glory.* And it is certain, that the apoſtle tells us, *We are juſtified by the grace of God, not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt;* and, therefore, the Lord will have all the ordering of the work of grace, that the creature ſhall have no ſtroke; that when that grace is manifeſted, and he partakes of it, (the creature having no hand in it) he that glorieth, may glory in him.

SERMON XII.

The Great Giver, and his free Gifts.

1 CORINTHIANS ii. 12.

Now we have not received the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.

AFTER a wonted tender-hearted ſalutation and congratulation to this church of *Corinth*, from chap. i. 1. to verſe 10. the apoſtle *Paul* falls upon a ſeaſonable exhortation to unanimity and concord of ſpirit among them; relating at large the

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the occaſion of this exhortation to them; to wit, the notice he had received of a dangerous ſtrife and contention fallen out among them, in reſpect of their partiality to perſons; this he continues to the 17th or 18th verſes of that chapter; and from thence to the cloſure of the chapter, he declares both the ſcope of his miniſtry in general, and the diverſity of ſucceſs, this miniſtry of his found, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

Now, in the beginning of this chapter, the apoſtle returns back to this church of *Corinth* in ſpecial; and, whereas the ſtrife was, *one was of* Paul, *and another was of* Apollos, *and another of* Cephas; he acquits himſelf from any thing that might, in reſpect of himſelf, tend to, or occaſion ſuch ſtrife and quarrel: therefore, in verſe 1. he wholly diſclaims all of man, which might tend to exalt man among them; *He came not in the excellency of ſpeech, or in words of man's wiſdom to them*; his miniſtry was exerciſed in a low plain-dealing way, without either human rhetorick or wiſdom of man. This he amplifies in verſe 4. for his part, he uſed no manner of inticing words to inveigle or beguile them.

Secondly, He goes on to declare to them the main ſubject of his miniſtry, which he drove at, which he commends both to miniſters and people, as the great thing they were to mind concerning divinity; a rule and pattern well worth imitation of all, verſe 2. *I deſire* (ſaith he) *to know nothing among you, but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*; he did not care, that the people ſhould know any thing

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thing elſe in the world, ſo that he might impart Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified, unto them.

Thirdly, He declares to them the reaſon, why he came with ſuch plainneſs and ſimplicity, without dreſs, in the exerciſe of his miniſtry, in verſe 5. namely, *That their faith might not ſtand in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God;* as if he ſhould ſay, They that are wrought upon by human rhetorick, and fineneſs of language, and are taken with reſpect of any fluency of words, theſe men's faith is built upon human wiſdom: they that are taken with the ſimplicity of the goſpel, as it is in Jeſus, ſimply preached, their faith is built upon the rock itſelf.

Now, leſt the apoſtle's miniſtry of the goſpel might grow into contempt, becauſe he waved that which was human in it; therefore, in the latter end of verſe 4. he vindicates the power and life of his miniſtry, even while it was ſo plain, and without man's wiſdom: though *Paul* came not in excellency of ſpeech and man's wiſdom, yet he came in *the demonſtration of the Spirit, and with power.*— So, though he condeſcends to the weakneſs of this church, being but babes in Chriſt, as he ſpeaks of them; yet he would have them know, though he did, by exerciſing his miniſtry in ſo low and plain a ſtyle for their ſakes; nevertheleſs, when he deals with thoſe that are perfect, that is, higher grown, he can riſe in a higher flight, and deal in more grown and deeper myſteries, than he did with them: and, in verſes 7, 8, he illuſtrates what depths there were in thoſe myſteries that he preached

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preached to thoſe that were capable of ſeeing them; and that is quoted out of *Iſaiah* lxiv. 4. *Eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love him.*

Now, whereas ſome might be ready to object, as the falſe prophets did to *Michajah*, *Which way went the Spirit of God from us to thee?* If wiſdom and prudence could not dive into thoſe myſteries *Paul* ſpake of, how could he come by them? he was of no more learning than they; they were as much inſighted in the law as he; if they could not, how could he?

He anſwers in the words following, *Though eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive them: yet, God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.* Let me tell you, there are ſecrets of God, that all the learning in the world ſhall never attain unto; only the teaching of the Spirit of God acquaints people with them; therefore, it is a branch of the new covenant of God to thoſe in it, *They ſhall be all taught of God;* and they ſhall no more need to ſay to their neighbour, *Know the Lord, for they ſhall all know the Lord;* that is, by his own teaching, *they ſhall be all taught of God.* It is true, in the miniſtry of the goſpel, this knowledge comes uſually to the people; but it is not the wiſdom of man, that either doth or can impart the ſecrets of God to this people; and theſe are the myſteries, the apoſtle ſaith, he preacheth unto thoſe that are

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more grown and perfect; there is ſtrong meat for thoſe that are old, as well as milk for babes.

Now the apoſtle proceeds on, namely, to ſhew how it comes to paſs that the Spirit of God, and only the Spirit of God, ſhould impart and communicate theſe myſteries, when the wiſdom of the world cannot poſſibly bolt them out; ſaith he, *God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit; for the Spirit ſearcheth all things, even the deep things of God.*— But ſome may ſay, the knowledge of theſe myſteries may come ſome other way: to take off that, in the following words, verſe 11. he ſhews expreſsly that the myſtery of the goſpel can come no other way, but by the Spirit of God only, as he will uſe inſtruments to himſelf: I ſay, the original of diſcovering the myſteries of the goſpel is not demonſtration by way of argument or diſcourſe; but the demonſtration is by the Spirit of God.— And the apoſtle illuſtrates it by way of compariſon, that the Spirit only is the original of the diſcovery of the myſteries of God: *As no man knows the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit that is in man;* ſo no man knows *the things of God, ſave the Spirit of God:* his meaning in this place is this; You have a thought in your hearts, and if you give no hint of it by external expreſſions, no man can conceive what you are thinking, till you ſhall ſome way evidence yourſelves: now, as it is impoſſible for any man to dive into ſuch a thought, ſo it is as impoſſible for all the creatures in the world to dive into the myſteries of God; but the Spirit that is of God only reveals them.

Now,

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Now, in the words of my text, the apoſtle begins to draw to a concluſion of this diſcourſe, and to ſum it up to a head; for having given this deſcription in general, concerning the Spirit's revealing things that could not otherwiſe be ſeen or known, he concludes that it was his, and the caſe of others; *Now we have not received*, &c.

Beloved, let me tell you by the way, it is a matter of great conſequence and eſtabliſhment to know the ſcope and intention of the Holy Ghoſt in the ſeveral portions of ſcripture, eſpecially building places that contain life, peace, and joy; and, therefore, I have the more inſiſted upon the opening of the text; for if you take a portion of ſcripture, and cut it off from the dependance, you may miſs the intention of the Spirit therein; for the words may ſound to another ſenſe, than the drift is, except the co-herence be ſeen and obſerved; this, I ſay, that in reading and preaching, there muſt be great regard had to what the Holy Ghoſt principally aims at in ſcripture.—— Thus much by the bye.

In the text there are three things conſiderable; *Firſt*, What the apoſtle aims at here, or the ſubject matter he is upon, namely, the manifeſtation of the things freely given of God; or to impart to us this, that there are things freely given of God to men.

Secondly, He ſpeaks of them as they may be known; *That we may know*, &c.

Thirdly, He ſhews how the knowledge of theſe things that are freely given of God is attained; and

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and that he ſets out, *firſt*, negatively, *Not by the ſpirit of the world; ſecondly*, affirmatively, *by the Spirit that is of God.*

The propoſition is this, *That the things freely given us of God, come to be known, not by the ſpirit of the world, but by the Spirit which is of God being received.*

I am confident, none here will ſtumble at the propoſition, being ſo naturally raiſed from the words of the text; I will not therefore ſpend time about that. There are theſe particulars in it worth conſideration: and that you may ſuck and be ſatisfied at the breaſts of conſolation, conſider, *Firſt*, what theſe things are the apoſtle ſpeaks of, that are freely given of God.

Secondly, What it is for theſe things to be given.

Thirdly, What it is for them to be given freely.

Fourthly, What it is to know theſe things that are thus freely given.

Fifthly, How they are made known to us by the Spirit which is of God.

Firſt, What theſe things are that are freely given us of God, for the illuſtration of which know firſt, that it is moſt certainly true indeed, all things whatſoever are the free gift of God to men: *He cauſeth the ſun to ſhine upon the juſt, and upon the unjuſt*; and it is the gift of God that he doth it: I will only touch one thing by the way, and be brief in it; know this, if *Adam*, and his poſterity, had ſtood in their innocency, had continued in the royal law, and never offended, that very life that was annexed unto obedience, I ſay,

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that very life had been a free gift; and, therefore, if you ſpeak of merit properly, as requiring a reward proportionable, and having equal power to the work, there could not be merit in a ſtate of innocency; but that very life, had it come from the performance of perfect obedience, had been a gift of God. I will give you one illuſtration, that will ſatisfy you fully in it; look upon all the creatures, as for inſtance, upon the ſun, that rejoiceth as a giant to run his race; it had its law, as we had, ſet before it, a kind of duty the very creature performs to the Creator; if God ſhould be bound to reward according to proportion, and ſo by way of merit, man's obedience with life, why not the obedience of the ſun in the firmament as well as man; the ſun is a creature, as man is; as a creature, man hath the ſame dependance upon the Creator as the ſun hath; what hinders but that the ſun in the firmament ſhould merit as well as man; ſeeing it performs as complete obedience in its way as man could do? Beloved, carry this for a principle everlaſtingly along with you, all that ever the creature partakes of, it hath from God; and ſo God oweth nothing to it, for that he partakes of, ſave that he oweth by free grant; had not God freely without motive put himſelf upon this, that man ſhould have life upon his obedience, he could challenge life no more than any other creature could.

But I will not follow this, theſe things, in general, not being the things the apoſtle principally aims at here; for though it be true, all things in general

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general are the free gifts of God, yet here he ſpeaks of things in a reſtrained way, of ſome ſpecial things peculiar to the beloved of the Lord; ſuch as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of, in *Pſal.* xxv. 14. *The ſecrets of the Lord are with them that fear him;* or ſuch things as Chriſt ſpeaks of, in *Matth.* xi. 25, 26. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes: even ſo, O Father, becauſe it pleaſed thee.* The things freely given of God, are the things the wiſe of the world cannot reach; they are hid from them: they are revealed and communicated unto babes. What are thoſe things, you will ſay? I can give you but a touch; for if I dive into the depth of the things, there will be no end, I ſhould never come to the bottom.

Firſt of all, God gives himſelf, and this is ſuch a gift as is a myſtery, the world doth not reach, they know not what it is; it is the greateſt gift that ever God could give his people to give over himſelf; it contains in it the moſt ineſtimable and invaluable treaſure that is in heaven or earth: for God to paſs over himſelf in ſuch a way of propriety, as that he hath no more command over himſelf, than the creature can have power over him, for that which is good for him; this, I ſay, is the ſtrangeſt thing that ever was; and yet God gives himſelf to his people, that is, he gives man as true a propriety in himſelf, as he himſelf hath in himſelf. You know, the Lord, ſpeaking of giving himſelf, expreſſes it thus, *I have married*

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thee to myſelf in truth and righteouſneſs; mark what the drift of it is, a huſband marrying a wife, by God's own appointment, gives himſelf up to the wife; ſee how the apoſtle expreſſeth it, *The huſband hath not power over his own body, but the wife; as the wife hath not power over her own body, but the huſband;* as much as to ſay, God being married to a perſon, he hath not that power over himſelf, as to deny himſelf, or the uſe of himſelf, to thoſe to whom he hath given himſelf; the believer hath power with God, ſo far as God can be uſeful unto the perſon to whom he gives himſelf. There is as much propriety in a believer to God, as there is in a wife to her huſband; this giving of himſelf by a deed of gift is frequently mentioned unto you in ſcripture, but eſpecially in the covenant of grace; where ever this covenant is repeated, this is the burthen of the ſong, as I may ſay; this is the great buſineſs, *I will be their God,* ſaith he, *and they ſhall be my people;* here is the paſſing of himſelf over to them; and this is, I ſay, one of the hidden things and myſteries that are freely given, God paſſeth over himſelf freely to us.

Secondly, God gives his ſon Chriſt, as well as he gives himſelf; that is a ſecond deed of gift, giving of his Son to men: this is frequently repeated; *To us a child is born,* ſaith the prophet, *Iſa.* ix. 6. *To us a Son is given,* ſo *Iſa.* xlii. 6. — The ſame prophet tells us what the Lord ſpeaks of Chriſt; *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes.* Here is a giving of Chriſt, you ſee; we are the gift of the

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the Father to Chriſt, ſo he is the gift of the Father to us.

Now in the giving of Chriſt there is to be conſidered, *firſt*, The gift of his perſon; *ſecondly*, The gift of all the fruits that redound from the participating of his perſon. *Firſt*, God gives the perſon of Chriſt to men; as much as to ſay, God gives him to ſtand in the room of men, and men ſtand in his room. So that in the giving of Chriſt, God is pleaſed, as it were, to make a change *, Chriſt repreſents our perſons to the Father; we repreſent the perſon of Chriſt to him; all the lovelineſs the perſon of Chriſt hath, that is put upon us; and we are lovely with the Father, even as the Son † himſelf. On the other part, all that hatefulneſs and loathſomeneſs in our nature is put upon Chriſt; he ſtands, as it were, the abhorred of the Father for the time ‡, even the forſaken

* This change of perſons is condemned as error, by D. W. in his *Goſpel-truth*, &c. p. 37, 38. but is a moſt glorious truth of the goſpel; and without which, it would be no goſpel, no glad tidings. It is fully expreſſed in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. as well as in other places, and is the ground of our redemption by Chriſt, of his ſatisfaction for us, and the atonement of our ſins, and the juſtification of our perſons, and indeed of our whole ſalvation; ſo that we have reaſon to break out in the ſame exclamation as *Juſtin Martyr* did upon it, in his epiſtle to *Diognetus*, p. 500. ὦ τῆς γλυκείας ἀνταλλαγῆς, *O ſweet change!* A work unſearchable! Benefits unexpected! that the tranſgreſſion of many ſhould be hid by one righteous perſon, and the righteouſneſs of one juſtify many tranſgreſſors.

[† John xvii. 23.]

‡ That is, while he bore the ſins of his people, ſuſtained the wrath of God, and was made a curſe for them; nor ſhould this ſeem harſh to any, eſpecially as the Doctor has qualified it; for he does not ſay he ſtands the abhorred, but, *as it were*, the abhorred of the Father; though, had he ſaid he was abhorred for a time,

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ſaken of the Father, as he repreſented our perſons bare our blame, ſuſtained our wrath, and drank the dregs of our cup. Here is the gift of the perſon; that which is Chriſt's, is our's; that which is our's, is his. There is an admirable expreſſion, in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He was made ſin for us, that knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* It is plainly manifeſted, that which we were, Chriſt became, *ſin for us;* then that which Chriſt was, we became, that is, *the righteouſneſs of God; for we are made the righteouſneſs of God in him.*

Secondly, With Chriſt there is the gift of the fruit of him; ſhe that hath an huſband, hath all that is his. I have read an ancient deed of gift, made by one of the firſt kings of *England,* giving all from the heavens to the centre of the earth: ſo that if there be minerals in the bowels of the earth, they are comprehended in the gift: ſo it is with Chriſt; God, in his Son, and with him, giveth all that he hath, and is. All the mines in

time, it is no more than the ſcripture ſays; *Pſal.* lxxxix. 38.—*Thou haſt caſt off and abhorred, thou haſt been wroth with thine anointed,* or with thy Meſſiah; which words are underſtood of Chriſt, by ſeveral interpreters, ancient and modern; Chriſt indeed, as the Son of God, was always the object of his Father's love; and ſo he was in his ſtate of humiliation, and even under his ſufferings and death; *John* x. 17. as the celebrated *Witſius* obſerves, "Chriſt was repreſented not only under the emblem of "a lamb, a fooliſh beaſt, and prone to go aſtray; but of a goat, "laſcivious, wanton, and of an ill ſmell; yea, of a curſed ſer- "pent, and on that account execrable, and curſed of God; not "for the taking of our ſins upon him, which was an holy action, "and moſt grateful to God; but for the ſins which he took upon "him, and for the perſons of the ſinners which he ſuſtained."—*Animadv. Irenic.* c. 3. ſ. 5. p. 43.

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the bowels of Chriſt are ours; *All things are yours, for ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's:* ſo that whatever is Chriſt's, by the gift of him, becomes the perſon's to whom he is given. Conſider what you can imagine Chriſt hath as a fruit growing from him as he is Chriſt, with him that fruit is given to man, namely, to his own people; as free juſtification from all ſin; free reconciliation with the Father; free adoption to all the glory and liberty of the ſons of God; firm peace and agreement without any more quarrelling between God and his people; a free uſe of all things in a ſanctified way *.

Finally, (we cannot run upon theſe particulars at large) The *third* thing given of God, is the Spirit of God; *He will give his Spirit to them that aſk him,* Luke xi. 13. There is a deed of gift of the Spirit; *I will ſend you another Comforter,* ſaith Chriſt, *and he ſhall lead you into all truth.*

And, as the ſpirit of God is the gift of God, ſo the knowledge of thoſe free gifts that are only known by the Spirit itſelf, is the gift of God.—With this Spirit, wiſdom and underſtanding are given, and the knowledge of the myſtery of the goſpel; that you ſhall not only have theſe things (ſpoken of before) given you, but the knowledge of them all; the ſound knowledge of them is as much the gift of God as the things themſelves; this is by the Spirit of God. Comfort is given by him; you ſhall never have reſt in your ſpirits,

[* 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.]

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but as he rocks you asleep, and gives you rest. In brief, as all things are given in Christ by his own purchase †, so all things are given in him by the Spirit, by way of application and possession in particular.

Let us, therefore, now consider (for I must now redeem the time) what it is for these (I might have mentioned other particulars that are given) to be given of God.

A deed of gift, is opposed to two things. *First*, To sale; *secondly*, To loan. These things therefore are communicated by God. *First*, Not by sale or bargain; he doth not play the merchant; here are my wares, give me the price, and take the commodity. I beseech you take heed of such principles as these are; the covenant of Christ, as some may imagine, runs upon this strain, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people;* that is, I will tell you upon what terms I will be yours: come bring this price, deliver up yourselves to me, and then I will be yours; give me the price and take it; God is no such huckster; he drives no such

† Our *English* divines, (for I don't remember to have met with it among others) especially of the last age, and many in this, have used the word *purchase*, concerning the blessings of grace and glory, and other things. They, indeed, come to us through the blood of the covenant, that so we may enjoy them consistent with the holiness and righteousness of God; but strictly and properly speaking, nothing was purchased by Christ, but his church; nor is any other in scripture ever said to be so; the only passage that looks like it, *Eph.* i. 14. respects the people of God, the portion and possession of Christ, purchased and redeemed by him; the reason of which is, the people of God, though given to Christ, were captives and in other hands, and therefore must be redeemed or bought out; whereas the blessings of grace and glory never were, It would be better, I think, if the word was disused.

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bargains in giving himself, and in giving Christ, and his Spirit; he makes no sale at all, for sale, and deed of gift, are opposite. If I buy such a thing of a man, he doth not give it me. Beloved, you must not think to bring a price to God, for those things you would have of him; take heed of such conceits, that your assurance, peace, and comfort must cost you dear before you have them; for God will take no cost or price at your hands. Observe that admirable expression in *Isaiah* lv. 1, 2, 3. by this you shall plainly perceive God is no huckster, he doth not keep shop, he doth not shew you wares, and ask a price of you before you have them: *Ho, every one that thirsteth,* (that is, that have a mind) *come to the waters, come buy and eat; buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* Why money, and price? there is a difference between money and price; namely, as there is a difference between money, and monies-worth: your poor men, their day's labour is monies-worth, and their day's-labour is a price; therefore, there is equality between the labour and the wages, as there is equivalence between the money and the thing bought. Now the meaning of the Holy Ghost here is, God doth not look for money, nor price, nor labour; he doth not look that men should earn their gifts before they have them; he looks not for the penny, nor for the penny's-worth; therefore, be not deceived, though in respect of Christ, God made a sale, and made him pay according to the bargain; in which regard, the apostle saith, *We are bought with a price;* yet,

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yet, in respect of us, I say, there is no sale at all. Let me tell you, there are more *Simonical* persons in the world than men are aware of. In *Acts* viii. the great sin of *Simon Magus* was, *That he thought the gift of the Holy Ghost might be bought with money*; the apostle in that chapter thunders out an execration upon him, for offering to think or speak this, *That the gift of the Holy Ghost might be bought with money;* and therefore he tells him plainly, *That he was in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, and that he had no part nor portion in the matter.* How near they follow to the heels and steps of *Simon Magus*, that will bring their price in their hands to God, to partake of the gift of the Holy Ghost, I leave it to the wise to judge. Therefore, you that would have your part and portion in this matter, of the gift of God, know that it must cost you nothing; this derogateth not from your obedience; there is employment enough for you, and there are ends sufficient for it, though this obedience be not the price you are to bring, from whence you are to expect the gifts of God: God requires your obedience to glorify him; to be the manifestation of your thankfulness; for the good of your brethren; for the manifesting and accomplishing his gifts in the use of ordinances; but that these should be a price, is a gross mistake. Do not dream that your conscionable walking before God here, is the thing that must commend you to him hereafter; nothing but Jesus Christ, sent out of the love and bowels of the Father, can possibly commend you to God.

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Do not think this, or that, you do, is that price from whence you are to expect the things of God; but, know, that these are given of him. I shall run over some heads very briefly, for I see I am much prevented.

Secondly, Therefore, besides sale, God's gifts are not a loan neither; this is a great consideration. The things that we have of God, as they are a gift, so they are not a loan; what we receive of him, are not lent. There is a difference between lending, and giving; he that lends money, looks it should be paid again; he that gives it, gives it for ever, without ever looking for it again. The things of God, as they are given, so he doth not look for them again. You know, it is a ridiculous thing to give a thing, and take it again; we count this children's play. How many of God's children, in temptation, look upon the things that God hath given them, and yet suspect he will take them again? What is lent, men may challenge again; but, when a man gives a thing, it is injustice for him to challenge it any more; there is the difference between lending and giving. If God gives things to men, and takes them again, he relinquisheth and frustrateth his own act; for if he takes them away, they were not given. A deed of gift, and title of land by deed of gift, are as firm as a title by purchase; what God hath given, he cannot call in again. I speak this to the consolation of trembling spirits; they look upon God bestowing himself, Christ, and his Spirit, and they receive what God hath given; yet their

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their ſpirits tremble, and they are afraid he will take theſe away again from them: they commit ſuch and ſuch ſins; therefore, ſurely, ſay they, I ſhall loſe that I have; remember the nature of a gift, and remember this too, that whatever God hath given, he calls it not in again. Suppoſe a father ſhould deliver up and give all his lands and goods to his ſon, and make a real deed of gift in law, paſſing it over to him, as firm as law can make it; this ſon, peradventure, commits ſome fault afterwards; can the father call in this deed of gift, in reſpect of the fault committed? Thou art a ſon of God, and a darling of his; it may be thou haſt committed many ſins; for *in many things we ſin all;* doth God call in his deed? Is not this deed of gift enrolled in the word of grace, and upon record? This very enrolling is ſufficient ſecurity to thee; thou canſt not be diſpoſſeſt of it.

There are many think that ſuch preaching gives way to licentiouſneſs; I anſwered it fully the laſt time I was among you; *I beſeech you by the mercies of God, preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice unto God.* The conſideration of the unchangeableneſs of the grace of God and his love; there is no other means in the world to keep men from ſin, but this ſtands firm for ever. As things are the gift of God, ſo they are unchangeable to them, to whom they are given; and the Lord give you wiſdom, and underſtanding, and his Spirit, to hold faſt a truth of ſuch infinite concern to the joy and peace of your ſpirits; and till you receive ſuch unchangeable principles, whereupon the ſtability of

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of your peace is founded, you will be like waves of the ſea toſſed to and fro with every wind of temptation; you will have every little thing raiſe ſuſpicions and jealouſies in your ſpirits, But, beloved, *God is not a man, that he ſhould lie, nor the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent: ſhall he ſay, and ſhall it not come to paſs?* Numb. xxiii. 19. Shall God aſſent to a thing, and how much more ſhall not he make good that word that he aſſents to? Certainly, when men give a thing, they will not take it away, ſeeing the thing is given; I ſay, the things of God are given, and he cannot take them away; *The gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt you.*

There are many things of uſeful conſideration, if time would give me leave to open them to you.

Thirdly, The things of God are not only given, but they are freely given.

I muſt not touch upon the heads; there are theſe five things conſiderable in a free gift; I will but name them.

Firſt, A free gift is, when a thing is given without compulſion; a man doth not properly give his purſe upon the highway, when thieves force him to it; things freely given are not compulſory, but voluntary.

Secodly, Things may be given, but grudgingly; they may be given with a heart reluctting againſt it; as many men give to the poor, to ſerve the neceſſity of the times; but it goes to their hearts to part with it; here is a gift, but it is not a free gift, becauſe the heart is not enlarged, here is not a ready heart; but God doth not give grudgingly,

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ly, he loves a cheerful giver, and doth ſo himſelf; for *He waits that he may be gracious*, Iſa. xxx. 18.

Thirdly, A gift is free, and free indeed, when a thing is given only out of the motion in, and from a man's own ſpirit, without any external incentive and provocation to put him upon ſuch a gift. It is commendable, I confeſs, for a man to be perſuaded by others to do good; but the glory of free gifts ſtands in the freeneſs of a man's own ſpirit without provocation. Know thus much in general, all the things we receive from God, there is no incentive, no provocation, no motive, as the original, to ſtir or provoke him to give them. Let me tell you this, Chriſt himſelf is not the original motive of the gift of God; he is the inſtrument, or, as the ſcripture ſaith, the mediator of our partaking of the gifts of God; the love of God in himſelf is the firſt fountain of all the gifts of God to us; nay, the very fountain of Chriſt himſelf, to compaſs the fruition and enjoyment of theſe gifts, that the love of God himſelf had firſt framed, compoſed, and ordained for us; much leſs then, can any creature in the world have prevalency with God to ſtir up bowels in him, as if he needed to be ſtirred up to do the good he doth; that which he doth, cometh from the motion of his own thoughts riſing in himſelf, not being raiſed up by any thing without himſelf.

Fourthly, A gift is free, when it is bountiful; ſuch a man is a free houſe-keeper; that is, he keeps a bountiful houſe: ſo the gifts of God are free in reſpect of his bounty; God doth not ſow ſparingly,

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ly, but liberally; he giveth us freely to enjoy all things; *There is plenteous redemption with him,* Pſal. cxxx. 7. There is abundance of ſatiety; *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe, they ſhall drink of the river of thy pleaſure,* Pſal. xxxvi. 8. Here is a free God; here is freeneſs indeed, in that he is a bountiful God, in all that he beſtows upon the ſons of men; he fills the cup to the brim, preſſed down, heaped up, and running over; in this manner is the bounty of God expreſſed; *He ſaves to the uttermoſt all them that come to God by him,* Heb. vii. 25.

Fifthly and *laſtly,* A free gift is a gift that is unconditional; God doth not propoſe conditions before-hand, but gives his gifts without reſpect to any condition. Beloved, do not miſtake; our faith, and obedience, are not the condition of God's gifts. That in the ſong of *Zachariah* is obſervable, *That he would grant us, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our lives;* obſerve, this ſervice *without fear in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the days of our lives,* is not the condition of deliverance, that we might partake of it; but here is firſt deliverance, and then ſervice is the fruit of it; not deliverance the fruit of ſervice; God delivers, and then we ſerve; and the tenor of the goſpel in this, is contrary to the tenor of the law; the tenor of the law runs thus, "Firſt do, then live;" the goſpel ſaith, "Firſt live, then do;" *When thou waſt in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, Live; then waſhed I thee*

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thee with water, then put on ornaments upon thee: Thus, when you conſider, the frame of the goſpel runs, that there is nothing comes to men, but as a free gift of God, even Chriſt himſelf is ſo given; do not think that God gives Chriſt upon condition.

Fourthly, What it is for men to know this gift of God; there is a twofold knowledge; in general, *Firſt*, A knowledge of the thing; *Secondly*, A knowledge of propriety in the thing; ſo there is a two-fold knowledge of theſe things given; *Firſt*, The knowledge of the things given; *Secondly*, The knowledge of propriety in them: the knowledge of the thing itſelf given is two-fold; *Firſt*, Intellectual; *Secondly*, Practical. The intellectual knowledge is the natural underſtanding of the thing in a proper ſenſe; practical knowledge is a ſenſible knowledge. You may diſtinguiſh them thus, as the knowledge man has of the ſweetneſs of ſugar in his underſtanding, and the knowledge of the ſweetneſs of it in the taſte. There is a great deal of difference between theſe two; for the things of God that are given, may be known intellectually in a common way, not only by the elect, but reprobate; but the people of God only know them practically, that is, they receive by degrees the ſweetneſs of them, and God gives the taſte of them more and more to them.

Secondly, There is beſides the knowledge of the thing, the knowledge of propriety, which is this, when men know the things of God, and know them as their own. It is one thing for a perſon to know ſuch a woman is wife, beautiful, and rich; and

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and it is another thing to know this wife, beautiful, and rich woman is my wife; that I have a propriety in all she is, and hath: and so, likewise, it is one thing for a woman to know that a man is a man of parts, of wealth, and honor; to know him that he is so, is one thing, and to know him that is thus wise, rich, and honorable, to be her husband, is another thing: so it is likewise in the knowledge of spiritual things; it is one thing to know God and spiritual things, another thing to know him by way of propriety, to know that he gives himself to me as mine; and so, likewise, of all the rest of the particulars that are given; as Christ and the Spirit: now all this comes not by the spirit of the world, but by the Spirit that is of God. This I should have shewed more at large; but of this hereafter; because I fear I have already trespassed upon your patience.

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SERMON XIII.

Reconciliation by Chriſt alone.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 19.

To wit, That God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.

THIS great apoſtle of the Gentiles, Saint *Paul* I mean, though he did not firſt break the ice, nor lay the firſt hand upon the wall of partition between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to pull it down, that they might become both one in one Chriſt; (for *Peter* went before him, and was indeed the firſt in this buſineſs, though with great bitterneſs of ſpirit even from the reſt of the apoſtles themſelves; who ſuppoſed that the glorious privileges of Chriſt, were to be confined only to the nation of the *Jews*, as you may perceive in *Acts*, chap. viii. and ix; though *Paul* I ſay, was not the firſt) yet, as he himſelf ſpeaks in this buſineſs of publiſhing the grace of God in Chriſt to the Gentiles, he laboured more abundantly than they all; of which labour of his, this chapter gives abundant teſtimony,

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testimony, especially in the beginning of verse 14, where he gives the great occasion, or motive, why he did preach Christ so clearly and freely to the Gentiles; *The love of Christ*, saith he, *constrains me*: as if he should say, seeing that the glory of the grace of God, hath so far extended itself, as that not only the *Jews*, but also the *Gentiles*, may have a portion in him, it is a pity that so much abundant grace which serves to the magnifying of Christ so exceedingly should be concealed; Christ hath done so much for me, thinks *Paul*, that it were an unworthy part in me to conceal that which should make so much unto his glory; the love wherewith he hath loved me, constrains me to do the utmost (that he might have all his praise) to manifest his glory.

Therefore, having thus laid down the great motive that set him on work to publish the gospel, he takes up this resolution to do it, let it cost him what it will; (as it is like to do all that will be so exact in publishing the gospel as he was) yet the love of Christ did so constrain him, that he cannot keep it in; he must speak out this love of his. Thus he comes to the business in the latter end of verse 14. *If one die for* all*, *then were* all *dead*; his meaning is this, he puts the emphasis

* The sense of the passage is not that Christ died for all that were dead, but that all were dead for whom he died; and the meaning is, that if Christ died for all, then all *those* were dead for whom he died.

Wherefore this text does not make for the doctrine of general redemption; for it should be observed, that it does not say that Christ died for *all men*, but for all; and so, agreeable to the scriptures, may be understood of all the persons mentioned.

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upon the word *all*; and that emphaſis is not ſpoken ſimply, but relatively and comparatively; as much as to ſay, It is not only the *Jews* have part in the death of Chriſt, but *all* have a part in it; If Chriſt had an eye not only on the *Jews*, but on the *Gentiles* too, in his death*; *then*, ſaith he, *all were dead*, that is, all his people have a part in that death.

Now, that the apoſtle here mainly intends the ſetting forth of the largeneſs of God's grace in Chriſt, extending not only to the *Jews*, but alſo to the *Gentiles*, verſe 16. makes clear; for, ſaith he there, *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh; yea, though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh; yet henceforth know we him ſo no more.* Give me leave to open the meaning of it; for I muſt tell you there is a great deal of miſtake concerning the ſcope of the apoſtle in theſe words, which makes the ſenſe of them ſo obſcure in the reading of them. The apoſtle was once of the ſame mind with *James*, and the reſt; that Chriſt, as he came of the fleſh of *Abraham*, and ſo, according to the fleſh, was of the kindred of all the *Jews*; they verily thought that the virtue of Chriſt, and redemption by him, had extended no further than to the fleſh, that is, to the ſame fleſh of which he came; they of the circumciſion chide *Peter*, that he ſhould offer to go without the bounds of the *Jews*, to preach the goſpel to them, which they thought had no part in it; the apoſtle was of this mind once; but *Henceforth*, ſaith he, *know I*

[* Rev. v. 9.]

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no man after the fleſh; that is, I will never preach Chriſt after the fleſh, as if none had ſhare in him but thoſe that are of the kindred of which he came; nay, ſaith he, *Though I have known Chriſt thus after the fleſh, henceforth know I him ſo no more;* where he expounds what he ſpake before; as if he ſhould ſay, I thought Chriſt had had a mind to ſave none but the kindred of which he came; I will know him thus no longer; I will preach the goſpel ſo no more; I will preach it no more to the *Jews* than to the *Gentiles;* they that are not of the fleſh of Chriſt, have as great a portion in him as thoſe that are of his fleſh.

Hence he begins to gather up his main doctrine which he would preach to the *Gentiles,* and that he brings in verſe 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature;* where the emphaſis lies upon the words *any man;* If *any man* be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; as if he ſhould ſay, This is the doctrine I will now preach to the world; not if the *Jew* be in Chriſt; but if *any man* in the world be in him, he is a new creature; every man in the world hath this privilege, as well as the *Jews;* if any man be in Chriſt, he ſhall be a new creature, as well as the *Jews:* and becauſe of ſome obſcurity in this phraſe, therefore in verſe 18. the apoſtle expounds his own meaning, what he intends by a new creature. Give me leave to open this place to you; for I muſt tell you there are ſome great miſtakes in this point. Moſt men think that this phraſe, *new creature,* is a renewed, ſanctified man, ſo as he becomes new in his own con-

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converſation, when his life is changed; I do not deny the truth of the thing, all that are in Chriſt, he renews them, ſanctifies them, and ſubdues iniquity in them; but, under favour, let me tell you, the apoſtle's meaning here by *new creature* is, not that they are ſanctified; but they are *new creatures*, that is, they are reconciled unto God; this is his meaning: *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature*, that is, he is brought into a new condition that he was not in before; and this new condition is, he is now reconciled unto God; whereas, before, he was an alien and ſtranger to him.

But, you will ſay, How will it appear that the apoſtle's *new creature* is a perſon reconciled, and conſidered as reconciled, and not as ſanctified?

I anſwer, This is clear by verſe 18. *For, all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* Mark well; the main thing he drives at here is, to let the *Corinthians* know, and us with them, what the main miniſtry was which Chriſt had committed unto them; which was this, to publiſh, that *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature.* What is that? namely, that *God, from whom all things are, hath reconciled us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt*; this was the miniſtry which was committed unto them.

Now, if the apoſtle had ſpoken here of ſanctification, he would have ſaid, that the miniſtry committed unto him, with the reſt, was a miniſtry of ſanctification, as well as reconciliation; but the miniſtry

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miniſtry God committed to him here was this, God reconciling men to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt; ſo that the being a new creature here, which was the miniſtry committed to the apoſtle, is reconciliation with God by Jeſus Chriſt. Now in verſe 19. the text that I have read unto you, he begins anew to explain more particularly, what this miniſtry is that the Lord hath committed unto him; *To wit*, ſaith he, *that God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* And, therefore, in the next verſe, you ſhall find, he makes this ſo eſſential a buſineſs to the miniſtry of the goſpel, that he calls himſelf, and the reſt, ambaſſadors, and ambaſſadors for this very purpoſe, namely, in Chriſt's ſtead, to beſeech people that they would be reconciled unto God; and then, in the cloſure of the chapter he tells them what the fruits of this reconciliation are, and by what means we come to partake of it: *He was made ſin for us, that knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* From which words I might obſerve to you, as they have reference to the coherence,

Firſt, What the great and main buſineſs of us that profeſs ourſelves to be the miniſters of Chriſt, ought to be in the world with men. It is to be lamented, I confeſs, and I would to God there were no occaſion to ſpeak of it, whilſt we profeſs ourſelves to be the ambaſſadors of Chriſt, to diſpatch this great buſineſs, to beſeech men in Chriſt's ſtead to be reconciled unto God; we are

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too much the miniſters of *Moſes*, preſſing and thundering the wrath of God from heaven; publiſhing unto men the working out their own ſalvation by their own works, according to the law; putting on them the performance of duties in every particular, that they may have peace and joy of ſpirit from it; telling them, that they muſt make their peace with God, by faſting, and prayer, and mourning: is this to beſeech men in Chriſt's ſtead to be reconciled unto God by Chriſt alone? This is the embaſſage of the miniſters of the goſpel; and whoever he be that forſakes this meſſage, he goes, and is not ſent; he takes upon him to manage a buſineſs out of his commiſſion; for the commiſſion is, that we in Chriſt's ſtead ſhould beſeech men to be reconciled unto God, and that by the blood of Chriſt alone.

Secondly, I might note a thing, which, peradventure, puzzles the heads of many people, how you may underſtand thoſe many texts of ſcripture that ſpeak ſo largely of the extent of the death of Chriſt, *He died not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world:* and ſo verſe 14. *If one died for all, then were all dead.* From whence many collect the univerſality of redemption unto all particular perſons in the world*; but from this coherence

* The learned *Hoornbeeck* aſſerts, that the Doctor from this paſſage, and 1 *John* ii, 2. after quoted, "Collects the univerſality of "the redemption of all particular perſons in the world, though "all are not partakers of that reconciliation:" in which this learned man appears to be miſtaken; for the Doctor does not collect this himſelf, only ſays, *Many collect it from hence;* and he himſelf ſeems to be of a different mind by the adverſative BUT *from*

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herence you may plainly perceive, that the apoſtle's main drift is not that every particular perſon partakes of reconciliation by Chriſt; he doth not ſpeak in reſpect of every particular, but in oppoſition to the *Jews*; as if he ſhould ſay, you miſtake yourſelves, you that are of the *Jews*, that boaſt of Chriſt, as if there were no Chriſt but in yourſelves; no, ſaith he, you are miſtaken, he goes beyond you, he goes over all the world. And when St. *John* ſaith, (1 *John* ii. 2.) *And not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world*, he doth not ſay *ours*, in reference to believers, but he ſaith *ours*, as he was naturally of the ſtock of *Abraham*; when he ſaith, *Not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world*, he doth not oppoſe the world unto the elect, but the WORLD of the ELECT unto the *Jews*; and his meaning is, all the world hath a part in Chriſt, and in every corner of it there is a portion of Chriſt, as well as there is in us, who are of the ſeed of *Abraham*; and, therefore, the apoſtle

from this coherence, &c. and expreſsly ſays, the apoſtle does not ſpeak of every particular perſon, but in oppoſition to the *Jews*; and ſo, on the other text, 1 *John* ii. 2. he obſerves, that the apoſtle does not oppoſe the world unto the elect, *but the world of the elect unto the* Jews; and ſuggeſts, that there are ſome in all the world, and in every corner of it, that have a part in Chriſt, and are his portion; which is very far from the doctrine of general redemption: and though the Doctor ſometimes uſes ſome general phraſes, when off his guard, yet I cannot think he held the doctrine of univerſal redemption; and this learned Profeſſor himſelf, who is the only one I ever met with that charged the Doctor with it, ſeems to have ſome heſitation himſelf about it; for he ſays, (of the Doctor and of thoſe in his time called *Antinomians*) "*Redemptionem docent aliquam univerſalem*, they teach "ſome ſort of univerſal redemption, or univerſal redemption in "ſome ſenſe."——*Vid.* Hoornbeeck's *Summ. Controverſ.* l. 10. p. 702, 703.

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(*Rom.* iv. 13.) ſaith expreſsly, *That the promiſe is not made to* Abraham, *and to his ſeed after the fleſh*, but to his ſeed after the Spirit, *that walk in the ſteps of the faith of* Abraham. By this you may be able to reſolve thoſe manifold difficulties that ariſe from the univerſality of the tender of grace by Chriſt unto the world; the world, I ſay, is oppoſed only unto the narrow confines of the *Jews*, and includes not particular perſons; but this is not that I mainly drive at for the preſent.

I come to the text itſelf. The ſubſtance of the main miniſtry of the apoſtle ſtands in this, that *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.* In which you may obſerve with me,

Firſt, The great grace, that living, lively, and heart-reviving grace the apoſtle brings to light, and commends, to the comforting of the hearts of God's people, and that is reconciliation with God.

Secondly, Note here, the original author or efficient of this reconciliation and grace, that is, God himſelf.

Thirdly, Note here, the main means by which this reconciliation is effected, and that is Chriſt himſelf alone; *God was in Chriſt.*

Fourthly, Note this, the time when this reconciliation was made between God and perſons in particular. The apoſtle himſelf, though he lived ſo many years before us, ſpeaks of it as a thing already paſt; he doth not ſay God *is*, or *will* be, but he ſpeaks in the preter-perfect tenſe, *God* was

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in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; it is a thing long before finished perfectly to our hands; that we may, when God hath given us eyes to behold it, see it as a thing already done, and perfected long before, and not now perfecting, much less now to be begun.

Fifthly, We may note the persons with whom God in Christ is reconciled, and that is the world; *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.*

The principal thing I mean to drive at, is the consideration of the great grace that the apostle brings here to light; and that is, reconciliation with God; *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.*

What is it (will you say) for God to be reconciled to persons?

For the clearing of this, *First*, note, something is to be premised as a necessary antecedent to reconciliation itself. Unto reconciliation, of necessity there must be supposed something to be done by us, occasioning a breach between God and us; administering such just cause of distaste, and of offence, as not only caused God to separate himself afar off from men, but also to prepare wrath and vengeance. Wherever there is reconciliation, it is supposed there was a breach made; and, upon the breach made, reconciliation is the bringing persons, thus at distance and difference by a breach, to become one again; and, therefore, you must know, there is no man under heaven reconciled unto God, but as he is, or was considered as walking contrary unto God; and that this contrary walking

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walking unto him hath occaſioned a breach between God and him. And, therefore, you ſhall find, when the apoſtle ſpeaks of our being reconciled unto God, he brings ſtill in this clauſe, that there were eſtrangement and diſtance, before ſuch union and reconciliation: as in *Eph.* ii. 13. you ſhall find how he brings in the previous conſideration; *You*, (ſaith he) *who were ſometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt*; this making nigh, or bringing together, is the reconciliation that is made with God; and the perſons, that are thus made nigh, before their bringing nigh, are ſaid to be afar off; as much as to ſay, there is that contrariety between God and man naturally, that puts him afar off from God, and makes him remote. *He beholds the wicked afar off*, (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *Pſal.* cxxxviii. 6. God keeps at a diſtance with men, when they walk in a way giving diſtaſte and offence unto him; and it is the buſineſs of Chriſt to bring them nigh again, thoſe that were thus ſometimes afar off. But the apoſtle ſpeaks more plainly in *Col.* i. 21, 22. *You*, ſaith he, *that were ſometimes alienated* (or eſtranged, that is to ſay, from God) *and enemies in your minds through wicked works, hath he now reconciled.*— Where he not only ſhews there is a remote diſtance, and a kind of eſtrangement between God and men, before reconciliation; but he delivers the true proper ground from whence this alienation proceeds; *who were alienated in your minds by reaſon of wicked works:* our wicked works are they that cauſe alienation and eſtrangement from God;

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And, ſaith he, *you who were thus ſometimes alienated, are reconciled by Chriſt.* And, therefore, know, this muſt be laid down as a certain poſition, and be received of men, that in reſpect of themſelves they are alienated and eſtranged perſons, and the wickedneſs of their ways is that which cauſeth that alienation and eſtrangement, and ſeparation, from God.

But ſome (it may be) will object; Was there ever a time that God was alienated and eſtranged as an enemy to thoſe people of his, with whom he is now reconciled? Some will ſay, God loves his people with an everlaſting love, and he never looks upon his people but with a look of love, and with a look of union.

For anſwer to this, give me leave to clear a myſtery unto you; this ſeems to be a kind of paradox, that God ſhould, from all eternity, look with eyes of love upon his people, and yet there ſhould be a time in which there ſhould be an alienation or enmity between God and them. For the reconciliation of this difference, you muſt know, it is one thing for God to recollect all future things that ſhould come in all the ſeveral times of the world, into one thought of his own; and it is another thing for theſe things to come to paſs in their ſeveral times, according to their own nature. You muſt know, it is true, that in God's eternal thoughts, according to the infinite vaſtneſs of his own comprehenſion, he did ſum up, from firſt to laſt, all the occurrences and paſſages which in ſucceſſion of time ſhould come to paſs. As for exam-

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example; —he had at once in his eye man in his innocency, in his fall, and in his reſtoration again by Chriſt; he had in his eye man committing ſin againſt him from time to time; and, at the ſame inſtant, had in his eye Chriſt dying for theſe ſins of men, and ſo ſatisfying his own juſtice for their tranſgreſſions. Now, becauſe God had all things at once in his eye, which, in reſpect of their actual being, are in ſucceſſion of time; therefore, it comes to paſs, that God, from all eternity, had everlaſting love unto his own people, tho' in time they do thoſe actions, which in their own nature, are enmity againſt God. For example; you and I are, it may be, this moment committing ſome ſin, which is enmity to the nature of God; that ſin, ſimply conſidered in its own nature, hath an eſtrangement in it, to ſeparate between us and God; but though it is true, that ſin committed hath, in its own nature, a power of ſeparating; yet, as God from all eternity had the preſent ſins we now commit, in his eye, and at the ſame moment had the ſatisfaction in his eye; from hence it comes to paſs, there was not a time in which God actually ſtood at enmity with our perſons: but, in reſpect of the nature of things coming ſucceſſively to paſs, man's condition may be conſidered as a condition of enmity; and again, it may be conſidered as a condition of reconciliation to God. That you and I were born in ſin is true, and that this our being born in ſin was a ſtate of enmity againſt God, is as true; that in the fulneſs of time Chriſt came into the world, and then actually

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actually did bear our ſins, by which God became reconciled unto us again, is alſo moſt certainly true. There is a great diſtance of time between ſin committed, and that ſatisfaction actually made; but, in reſpect of God's eye looking upon all things at once, there is no diſtance of time between that enmity ſin did produce, and that reconciliation that the blood of Chriſt hath wrought, to take away this enmity. I hope, though this be a high myſtery, yet it will be clear to ſuch that will but take into conſideration that difference between God's own ſimple act of compriſing all the ſins of the world at once (I mean that infinite act of God in that infinite comprehenſion of his), and the ſucceſſion of things in their own time and nature; this being ſuppoſed, that perſons actually do that which is enmity, and that which makes a difference and ſeparation.

Reconciliation itſelf briefly ſtands in this, namely, that whatever breach there was, or was occaſioned by any act of man in it, all theſe breaches are quite made up, and taken away: when God is reconciled to perſons, he hath no more quarrel with, nor controverſy againſt them with whom he is reconciled; though this day, yeſterday, to-morrow, and the next day, thou doſt commit a ſin, which, in its own nature, is enmity, and may occaſion a breach between God and thee; yet, I ſay, if God be once reconciled, all whatever adminiſters any quarrel or controverſy between God and thee, is abſolutely taken up; he hath no more to object againſt thee, or to hit thee in

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in the teeth withal. Underſtand, I beſeech you, the nature of reconciliation, and you ſhall find there is more in it than uſually is apprehended; you know as long as men ſtomach one another, and, as often as they have occaſion, are quarrelling one with another; all this while theſe perſons are not reconciled indeed, though peradventure there may be ſome complimental ſhaking of hands; if ſtill there be ſnarling one at another, and ſtomaching one another, they are not reconciled: ſo I ſay, is God quarrelling with thy ſpirit? is he ſtill hitting thee in the teeth with ſuch and ſuch ſins, thou committeſt againſt him? is the bitterneſs of God poured upon thee? is his wrath revealed againſt thee? I ſay, if there be this wrath of God at any time truly revealed againſt thee, there is not yet a reconciliation of God towards thee. In reconciliation there are no old grudgings, quarrellings, and controverſies; there is no hearing of them any more; in that there are forgiving and forgetting, as you uſe to ſay; and all this, whatever it is with men, it is thus with God; wherever God is reconciled, he forgives and forgets for ever.

Therefore you ſhall find when the Lord ſpeaks of reconciliation in the covenant, he ſaith, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people;* here is the drawing and making a perſon one with himſelf; *And your ſins and your iniquities will I remember no more,* follows it. I beſeech you, obſerve it well, there is a great deal of matter in this expreſſion, and this will give you reſt if ever you have it.

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Either you muſt deny God is reconciled, or you muſt conclude he hath forgiven your tranſgreſſions, and he will remember your ſins no more.

It may be you feel much corruption venting itſelf; though you act this and that tranſgreſſion at this time, if God be reconciled to you, he doth not remember your ſins you now commit; *Your ſins*, mark it well, becauſe I know it is harſh to men, and contrary to ſenſe and reaſon, yet it muſt be true, becauſe the Lord hath ſpoken it; *Your ſins, and your iniquities, I will remember no more.* You will ſay, when? I anſwer, when God is entered into covenant with a people; *And this ſhall be the covenant I will make in thoſe days*, ſaith the Lord, *I will ſprinkle you with clean water, and your ſins and iniquities I will remember no more.*

How can this be, you will ſay, is God grown ſo forgetful, that he takes no notice, that at this inſtant I ſin, and cannot he remember I ſin? This ſeems to be a mighty ſtrange argument.

Now ſuppoſe I could not anſwer this; is this a truth that God ſaith, or no, *Your ſins and your iniquities I will remember no more?* If this be not a truth, then the word of God is un-true, and then farewel all the ground upon which a perſon ought to build; but let God be true, and every man a liar; therefore, to clear it, I ſay, God remembers, and knows well enough that we act this: his meaning then is, I will remember them no more, to hit you in the teeth with them; I will have no more to ſay to you for theſe tranſgreſſions

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you now commit; for all that he has to ſay againſt iniquity, againſt this preſent iniquity committed; he hath ſaid it over to Chriſt already, when he was upon the croſs; and this ſin now committed was then in the remembrance of God; he took the full payment for it, and for that ſin that ſhall be committed to-morrow, unto the end of the world, he took all the payment of Chriſt; therefore he will never repeat them over to you; this is God's way, not to hit his people in covenant in the teeth, nor upbraid them with any ſin they commit; this is plain in the latter end of the text, *Not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them:* as if he had ſaid, I will never call you to an account for the ſins you commit; I will never tax you for them; you ſhall be in mine eyes as if you did not ſin; all that I mean to aſk, I have it already, at the hands of my Son; *I have beheld the travail of his ſoul,* Iſa. liii. 11. *and am ſatisfied* with the beholding of it. In *Iſa.* xxvii. 4. you have a notable expreſſion, *Fury is not in me,* ſaith God. You will ſay, how can that be; is not God angry? Doth he not pour out his wrath, and vengeance? Doth not his fury burn againſt ſin? The prophet ſpeaks in the name of God in that place; *Fury is not in me:* but if you will read the paſſage well, obſerve it, and you ſhall find of what time the Lord ſpeaks this; he ſpeaks not of the preſent, but of a certain time that he propheſieth of. The Lord hath a vineyard, he watcheth over it, and waters it night and day; and this vineyard ſhall enlarge its borders, and ſhall ſpread itſelf over all

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the world: the meaning then is this; there is a time to come, wherein the people of the Lord, the vine of the Lord shall spread itself, not in the garden of *Israel* only, but all the world over; that is, the Gentiles shall be received into fellowship with God, as well as the *Jews*; Christ shall come, and pull down the wall of partition; and the gospel of Christ shall be preached all the world over; then *Fury shall not be in me*; when Christ hath offered up himself, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified, then the Lord hath no more fury to pour out upon such as are in him: when your reconciliation is made with God; know from the first time of it till your last breath, there shall not be the least fury in God to you; for that is poured out upon Christ already, and there is not one drop of that poison to be poured out upon you. *Isa.* liv. 9. is a most admirable place; *As I have sworn* (saith the Lord) *that the waters of* Noah *shall no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.* What not God be wroth with, nor so much as rebuke persons? Yea, so saith the Lord, *I will not be wroth, I have sworn unto thee, that as the waters of* Noah, *&c.* You know the Lord made a covenant, that there should never come a flood to drown the world any more; this covenant is firm, so as that the water shall drown all the world again, before God will be wroth with his people any more; when is this? Look into the beginning of the chapter, and you shall see; when the *Jews* shall inherit the Gentiles, then it shall be.

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But you will ſay, the Lord in that chapter ſaith, *For a little moment have I hid my face; in a little wrath I hid it*, verſe 8. and therefore it ſeems God was wroth and angry, then, when he ſaid he would not be wroth, and with the ſame people.

But mark it well, there is a great miſtake, as if the Lord ſpake all in that chapter to the ſame people; he diſtinguiſheth between his preſent dealing with them, and with his people afterwards, when the Gentiles ſhall come into his fold; indeed it is true, he ſaith, he forſook this church as the wife of his youth, *But with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy upon thee*, ſaith he: there was a time in which the Lord was wroth, and hid his face; but there is a time when he will not only be kind, but will have mercy with everlaſting kindneſs; that is, a kindneſs that hath no intervenings of wrath mixed, but that holds out, an everlaſting love; and this mercy without any wrath between, ſhould be when the people of the *Jews* ſhould inherit the Gentiles; when the fulneſs of the Gentiles ſhall come in, by Chriſt's taking away the wall of partition.

In brief, know this is as a certain truth, God once reconciled is ſo for ever; God is not ſuch a changeling as to be reconciled to day, and fall out to-morrow again; God when he is once become friends with a man, he is ſo for ever; nothing ſhall break* ſquares between God and him.

[* Rom. viii. 38, 39.]

Again,

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Again, Consider by what means this reconciliation is wrought, and then it will be manifest unto you that God cannot be angry, it is by Christ; *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.* I ask this question, did Christ fully satisfy the indignation of God, or did he satisfy it only in part, leaving some remainders of it for the creature to come after and bear? If Christ did not fully satisfy indignation, he is but a piece of a Saviour; he did not save to the uttermost; he should be no perfect Saviour, if he did not satisfy the wrath of God to the uttermost; but if he did fully satisfy, as God himself *beheld the travail of his soul, and was satisfied;* then all indignation is past. Look as it is with men that are to make accounts; suppose a man should account for a hundred several sums, these accounts are not satisfied, except he satisfy and pay every sum; if he pay ninety-nine sums, and leaves but one unpaid, the creditor is not satisfied. Either Christ hath paid all, or some must come after to pay the rest; certainly, indignation never ceases till there be satisfaction. Either God hath satisfaction perfectly in Christ, or a believer must pay the remainder; either he hath the full of Christ, or a believer himself must satisfy. Suppose that Christ had satisfied God's indignation for all sins but one, and a believer must satisfy that one; that one is enough to damn him for ever; for he cannot give satisfaction for one sin.

If Christ had satisfied for all, and had taken away

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away the whole indignation, how can God come and pour out new indignation?

And (to conclude) know this, that this perfect reconciliation, this peace with God, is not a thing now to be agitated, and controverted in heaven; as if there were an act of parliament now in hand, in hope it will pass, which must have some fear with it, lest it should miscarry; but God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. Let me tell you, whoever you are that can claim a part in Christ, your reconciliation is finished to your hands; Christ is not now making reconciliation in heaven for you; *God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself:* he is not now reconciling; the thing is finished; your reconciliation is complete. God hath past it not only by vote and consent in heaven, but he hath past it upon record under his hand, in the ministry of the gospel; we hold out to you reconciliation done; we do not hold it forth as doing, or to be done with him; but it is done with him; if you do but close with it, the thing is finished for you.

SER-

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SERMON XIV.

Chriſt's Free Welcome to all Comers.

JOHN vi. 37.

And him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out, or caſt off.

THESE are the words of our Saviour; the occaſion was this, he having not only a natural ſympathy and compaſſion, but alſo being a ſpiritual phyſician, diſperſes abroad common mercies in an extraordinary manner. In the former chapter, he is plentiful in healing the ſick, and curing many diſeaſes; natural men, being ſenſible of ſuch kindneſſes, flocked mightily after him. And, though Chriſt knew well enough what they were, as you ſhall ſee by-and-by, yet he ſhuts not the bowels of compaſſion from them in extremity: there were many ready to faint;—now, rather than they ſhould want ſupply, he would work another miracle, and, with a few loaves and fiſhes, ſatisfy thouſands of them, and ſo

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so he doth. This people finding good cheer, they are like dogs, can scarce leave the house,—(bear with the expression, for they were no better, for all their flocking to Christ)—I say, they were so eager to follow him, no ground should hold them. Christ takes ship, and goes over sea to *Capernaum*; no country is too cold for them; nay, the sea itself shall not part Christ and them; after him they will go.

Well, they come to him; and, because he had been so kind to feed them, they think they may be familiar with him; and, therefore, after their carnal fashion, begin to put questions unto him, I say, in a fleshly way: in a low fashion they begin to argue with him, *How came he there?* such poor silly stuff they object to him. Well, tho' Christ had natural compassion, yet he will not soothe them in their folly and simplicity, but deals roundly with them, and tells them plainly, they were mistaken in him, if they thought his excellency did stand in working miracles for food, for bread; he came on a higher errand, and a business of greater consequence; and, therefore, tells them plainly, it was another business he came about; their thoughts must rise higher than the loaves; *Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life.* He comes about eternal life, he brings that which might produce that unto them, and therefore counsels them to look after it. Well, because they are in talk, they hold it on, though to little purpose, and put another question to Christ, *What shall we do, that we*

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may work the works of God? Naturally, men are upon doing to get; when we talk of matters of religion, it is doing gets every thing; therefore, they will be doing, that they may have ſomething: now, though Chriſt doth not anſwer the queſtion they made, being a ſilly one, yet he gives them another anſwer that was to the purpoſe; *This is the work of God, to believe in him whom he hath ſent.* Never look to get it by doing; look to get it from him, and not from yourſelves, and your own doings.

When Chriſt had made that anſwer, they began to be a little angry with him, and to put a cavilling queſtion, or a queſtion by way of exception againſt him; *What ſign ſheweſt thou,* (ſay they) *that we may ſee and believe?* Moſes *gave us this bread from heaven;* (ſpeaking of manna) What doth Chriſt tell them of life that he brings? — What, is he better than *Moſes?* — Will he give better bread than manna was? Well, (for all their heat, paſſion, and peeviſhneſs) he will anſwer them again; *Moſes did not give you that bread from heaven;* and again, *Your fathers did eat manna, and are dead:* here he takes them off from their great Rabbi, whom they mentioned, as if he was their Chriſt; and alſo from their objection; ſaying, that the manna they did eat was but ſatisfactory for a time, there was not life in it; they that did eat it are dead; and, therefore, he comes to make application, and to ſhew wherein he excelled *Moſes,* and wherein that bread he brings exceeds manna, verſe 35. *He that comes to me, ſhall not*

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not hunger; and he that believes in me, shall not thirst; they eat manna, and yet were empty for all that; they drank of the rock *Moses* smote, and yet they were athirst again; *But he that comes to me, shall not hunger;* I have so much as shall satisfy, there shall be no lack at all.

After Christ had made this discourse, he begins to deal plainly with them indeed, and tells them, *Though they had seen, yet they believed not.* It may be some discouragement to men, that labour in the vineyard of the Lord, to see small fruit of their labours; but here, you see, Christ himself took a great deal of pains with these men, and all to little purpose, or rather to no purpose at all: therefore, in verse 37, Christ comforts himself against that common dis-comfort; which was, though these men believe not, yet, *All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me;* I shall have all that I expect; I never look for more than the Father gives me; and of those, that he gives, I shall lose none: and then afterwards, in the words of the text, he comforts those that do come; these, that would not come, he leaves, and falls to consolation for his people that do come; *He that comes to me, I will in no wise cast him out.*

The doctrine the words afford, will be natural, it shall not vary a jot from the very words of the Holy Ghost; *He that comes* to Christ, he *will in no wise cast him out:* mark it well, beloved, there is abundance of life in it, to those whose eyes the Lord will be pleased to open, to behold the fulness in it; I say, he that comes to Christ, it is no matter

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matter who nor what he be, there is nothing in the world can be conſidered as an hinderance to his coming; if he do but come, he may be certain of this, *he ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out;* there is no man under heaven, be he as vile as can poſſibly be imagined, if he do but come to Chriſt, even while he is ſo, ſhall be rejected of him, or have a repulſe. Beloved, I deſire the doctrine itſelf may be printed and ſtamped in your ſpirits.

Give me leave to ſpeak a few words in general, before I come to particulars: I know, I may ſpeak that which will be offence to ſome, but I muſt ſpeak the truth of the Lord, whatever men ſay. I ſay, whatever thou art in this congregation, ſuppoſe a drunkard, a whore-maſter, a ſwearer, a blaſphemer and perſecutor, a madman in iniquity, couldſt thou but come to Jeſus Chriſt; I ſay, come, only come, it is no matter though there be no alteration in the world in thee*, in that inſtant when

* That is, no alteration viſible to him, or others; none in his heart that he can obſerve, or take any encouragement from; nor any in his life and converſation obſervable to men; otherwiſe, there muſt be an alteration in him, or it is impoſſible for him to come to Chriſt, that is, believe in him: he muſt have grace given him to draw him, or he will never come, he cannot, *John* vi. 44—65. The deſires of the ſoul muſt be towards Chriſt; there muſt be a ſight of him, and of both the want and worth of him: but the ſenſe is, that a man that has been ever ſo vile, even to the very inſtant that he is called, and directed to Chriſt, and while he can ſee nothing elſe but ſin in him, he ſhould not ſtay for any preparations and qualifications in him fitting him for Chriſt; that is, 'till his heart is cleanſed, and his life reformed, but as vile a ſinner as he is, and in the view of all the notorious ſins he has lived in, ſhould go to Chriſt, and venture his ſoul on him.—The deſign of theſe expreſſions, however offenſive they may be to ſome, is not to encourage men in ſin; nor do they ſuppoſe, that

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when thou doſt come; I ſay, at that inſtant, tho' thou be thus vile as can be imagined, come to Chriſt; he is untrue if he put thee out; *In no wiſe*, ſaith he, *will I caſt out.*

There are two ſorts of people in the world that are given by the Father to Chriſt, who yet, for the preſent, do not actually come to him.

Firſt, There are a ſort of men in the world, elected indeed, but, for the preſent, are wild aſſes upon the mountains, ſnuffing up the wind, and as deſperate in iniquity as the verieſt reprobate under heaven; and yet there ſhall not be rejection of theſe perſons when they come; I ſay, whenſo-

that men, on coming to Chriſt, may, or will continue ſuch as they have been before; for an alteration in heart and life, follows at once upon coming to Chriſt; by faith the heart is purified; that works by love, and is attended with the fruits of righteouſneſs; but to ſhew that nothing ſhould hinder or diſcourage ſenſible ſinners, though ever ſo vile, from immediate coming to Chriſt, and that nothing will hinder him from receiving ſuch, and that ſuch ſhould not wait for any qualifications to fit them for him, and if they had them, ſhould not bring them to him for that purpoſe; but ſhould come as ſinners, and commit their ſouls unto him, believing in him unto ſalvation. Thus *Saul*, in the height of his rebellion, when his heart and mouth were filled with blaſphemy againſt Chriſt, and bitterneſs againſt his people, and in the full purſuit of theſe luſts, the Lord called him by his grace, and revealed his Son in him; Chriſt appeared to him; light ſhone around him; grace reached his heart, and brought him at once to the feet of Jeſus; hence he ſays, *I, who was before a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, and injurious perſon, I obtained mercy*; on which *Beza* has theſe words, *Hæc ſunt opera preparatoria*, (or, as in his *Major Annotations*, *ea merita preparationis*) *theſe are the preparatory works* the apoſtle ſets himſelf off with; for nothing intervenes between his having been all this, and his obtaining mercy, as the cauſe of it, or as fitting him for it; and had he been guilty of adultery, drunkenneſs, and ſwearing, (crimes not greater than what he had been guilty of) he could, and no doubt would have ſaid, I *Paul*, the adulterer, the drunkard, the ſwearer, I obtained mercy.

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ever they come, though as ſinful as their ſkins can hold; yet when they come to Chriſt, they ſhall not be caſt out; for the preſent indeed, they deſpiſe their birth-right, they ſcorn the grace of God, and caſt it at their heels.

But there are a ſecond ſort of people given by God to Chriſt, that have not received him, and are not actually come to him; and yet for the preſent are wrought upon to be a willing people in ſome ſort; that is, the Lord hath dealt thus far with them, fain they would cloſe with Chriſt, fain they would conclude an intereſt and portion in him; Oh! it would be welcome to them; it would be life to them, to be certainly ſatisfied that his blood is their ranſom, and that their ſins are blotted out thereby; I ſay, fain they would, but they dare not yet cloſe with Chriſt for their lives; they dare not ſet up their reſt here; they dare not ſit down with any ſuch concluſion; but ſtill there is ſomething or other, that remains, that muſt be removed out of the way, before they can make this certain concluſion, Chriſt is theirs:—now, my principal errand is, at this time, to this latter ſort of people; a people, I ſay, whoſe hearts tell them, if it could appear clearly, that, without danger to them, they may ſay, Chriſt is their ſalvation, and ſit down with this; if they could be ſatisfied with it, rather than their lives they would have Jeſus Chriſt, but they dare not: ſomething or other is wanting, they dare not lay hold upon him, and it is preſumption for them to ſit down ſatisfied, Chriſt is theirs; this is the generation

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neration I am at present to deal with, and to declare, by the power of Jesus Christ, his clear mind to them, and by that power to pluck them out of the mire, wherein for the present they stick fast.

And that I may the better come upon the spirits of such loaden persons, let us consider these three things:

First, What this coming to Christ is, that is here spoken of.

Secondly, What his purpose is in proposing this coming to him.

Thirdly, What he means by this expression of his, *I will in no wise cast him out.*

I shall speak briefly of the two former, because the life of Christ's purpose lies in the last of these particulars.

First, What doth Christ mean by coming unto him? In verse 35. he will give you his mind himself, *He that comes unto me shall not hunger, and he that believes in me shall not thirst*; mark it well, he makes coming and believing, in sense, all one: for if you observe it, such as Christ deals withal they are unsatisfied and empty ones; now he satisfies the empty; and whose emptiness will he fill? even of those that believe in him, that come to him: believing and coming therefore are all one, so that to come to Christ, is to believe in him.—But we are as far to seek as we were, you will say, what is that believing on Christ? In *John* i. 12. you shall see what it is to believe on him; *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*

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Here he makes receiving and believing all one, as before he made coming and believing. The ſum, in brief, is this—the coming to Chriſt is no more but the receiving of him for ſhelter and ſuccour. A man is ſaid to come to a ſtrong-hold, when he enters into it for his ſecurity and ſafety; he doth not ſtand hacking and hammering, ſhall I, or ſhall I not? but danger forces him, and in he gets, the door being open, and comes to his ſtrong-hold: ſo a perſon comes to Chriſt; Chriſt opening, he ſlips in, and ventures himſelf with him, and caſts himſelf into his arms, and he will ſink or ſwim with him.

Beloved, whoever you are that can but come to him, be you what you will, or may be, I ſay, if you come to him, to venture yourſelves upon the rock Chriſt, to ſink or ſwim, as he will ſupport or ſink under you, counting him a refuge, to have him for your ſuccour; *In no wiſe will he caſt you out.*

But, *Secondly*, to what purpoſe doth Chriſt propoſe coming here, will ſome ſay? Beloved, I propound this the rather, becauſe I conceive men miſtake the mind of Chriſt, concerning this coming. You muſt not imagine, that our motion of coming is the *primum mobile* that gives motion to Chriſt to open and entertain; as if our coming did ſtir him up to ſet open, and give entrance: Chriſt hath not any ſuch thought in him, that we muſt come, and therefore will own us for his own; for it is certainly true, the very motion of our coming to Chriſt, is from himſelf, and from his

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his coming to us, before we do so much as move. It is a common principle known to all divines, and most people; we are first acted, and then we act, *acti agimus*. *First*, Christ gives to us to come, and then, by his gift, we come to him; we must not imagine, by coming to Christ, he is moved and invited towards us, and is stirred up to open to us, and give entertainment to us; but his first coming to us, and living in us, stirs us up to motion: *You that were dead in sins and trespasses*, (Ephes. ii. 1.) *hath he quickened*. Beloved, is there death till Christ quickens? Where then can there be this motion of ours, before he himself be come with his life? Where there is no life, you know there is no motion; and, till the fountain of life communicates it, there can be none; therefore it is Christ that gives this coming unto men, and he having given it, they come to him.

But what is the purpose of Christ then, in speaking of coming here, as if this were a preparation, or a previous condition, that there is no portion in Christ, till there be first coming?

I answer, Mark the scope well, you shall find Christ doth not intend a necessary condition, but the removal of all objections; he doth not intend to put us on doing to get him, but to take away all obstacles that may hinder us from coming to him: and the emphasis of the text doth not lie upon coming, but upon this, *In no wise will I cast them off:* as if he had said, you are poor wretches; you think I am so hard-hearted, I will cast you off,

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off, you are so sinful: but let not this trouble you; whatever sinfulness you have, that, in common apprehension, may hinder me from receiving you coming to me, for all this I will not cast you out when you come. As when a man says to a poor man, Come to my house, I will give you something; he proposeth no conditions but grace to him; you shall have something, I will give you this and that.

But, I will come to the *Third*, the main thing I intend at this time, namely, what Christ intends when he saith, *I will in no wise cast you out.* Oh! the depth and unsearchable grace that is comprehended in these few words! If it might shine with its own brightness to your spirits, how would you go away leaping and rejoicing, with joy unspeakable and glorious! Why the Lord is able to communicate to you, above all we are able to ask or think. *I will in no wise cast you out;* do but come, and nothing, I say, nothing shall stand between you and me, to put a bar to hinder an entrance to me.

There are two estates whereto this grace mentioned may belong; either that estate wherein is the breaking forth of the first light to the soul; or that estate wherein, after light is broken forth, darkness seems to come again in the place of it; and this passage of Christ hath reference to both these estates.

First, The first estate wherein light begins first to break out, the first dawning of the light of Christ. To give you an instance, and so bring the

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business close:—Suppose a person, as the apostle does, *Eph.* ii. 2. *You, who were dead in trespasses and sins, hath he quickened; wherein in times past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, that now rules in the children of disobedience:* I say, suppose a person to be in the worst condition you can imagine; single out the vilest man in the world, the notablest drunkard that ever breathed, the greatest whore-master, and the lewdest person that can be imagined; such a person as this, and continuing to this very instant, now before the Lord, as he was before, without any change and alteration in the world until this time; suppose such a person; by this text it appears so manifest, that if the Lord do but grant, and hath but put a willingness and readiness of spirit into this man *, that Christ he would have, if it might appear he might have him; if his heart do but say, I would have him, all that sinfulness, though to this instant continued in, is no bar in the world, but this man may claim his portion in Christ, and have as certain security that his portion is there, as any other man may have. Mark well, I say, this passage, *I will in no wise cast him out:* our Saviour plainly imports that there neither is, nor can be devised, no not by God himself, any one consideration whatsoever, which might occasion him to put off,

* Here you see clearly the Doctor supposes willingness and readiness of spirit to come to Christ, put into such a sinner; which is owing to power and grace thus making willing, and such a soul will never be rejected let him be ever so vile.

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or ſay nay, to any one that comes: no conſideration in the world, I ſay, can ſo aggravate a man's condition, could he make it as bad as the devils themſelves; yet, if there be but a coming to Chriſt, there can be no conſideration in the higheſt pitch of ſinfulneſs for him to reject, or put by a perſon coming to him; for, you muſt know, Chriſt is well acquainted with all the objections the heart of man (nay the devil) can make againſt the freeneſs of his grace, and life by him; to ſave labour, therefore, in this one paſſage, *I will in no wiſe caſt out*, Chriſt at once anſwers all the objections that could be made. And I dare be bold to maintain, in his name and ſtead; let a man but ſay, and lay down this for granted, come he would, Chriſt he would have rather than his life; let this be granted for a truth, I will be bold with Chriſt out of this paſſage to anſwer ten thouſand objections, even fully to the ſilencing of every one that can be made: *I will in no wiſe caſt him out*; that is, I will upon no conſideration that can be imagined and conceived. I know the objections are many, and they ſeem to be very ſtrong, in reſpect of ſuch a perſon to whom the Lord hath given a willingneſs and deſire of ſpirit to cloſe with Chriſt, and yet dare not do the thing; I ſay, they are many, and very ſtrong; but, let them be what they will, you ſhall ſee by-and-by they come to no value in the world, there is no ſtrength in them. Let me tell you, the Lord hath ſent me, at this time, *to proclaim liberty to ſuch captives*, that are in this ſad, bitter, and (to their thinking) deſperate con-

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dition; liberty God hath given thee, if thou wilt come freely; nothing in the world shall hinder thee.

But let us consider the objections that may be made, and therein see what ground poor sinners may have to forsake their own mercy, and so become their own tormentors.

I dare not close with Christ, (saith many a poor soul) if I sit down and close with him, being satisfied with this argument, Christ offers himself to sinners, this is presumption; why so? I am the filthiest creature that ever breathed; I should stink above ground with my sins, if you knew what a creature I am, and what an ungodly sinner I am; I am a blasphemer; I do nothing but blaspheme the God of heaven; and I blaspheme his word to persecution; my spirit is mad against the gospel itself.

I answer, in a word, reckon up all you can imagine, suppose the worst you can conceive, the truth of the worst, that you have not belied yourselves a jot, in proposing the abominable filthiness and loathsome baseness of your filthy condition; suppose this be imagined; what of this? Surely, as long as I am in this case, Christ cannot belong to me, there is no coming to him for me. If this be truth that you say, that such and such filthiness stands between Christ and you, that though you come, there could be no entertainment with him for you; supposing this to be true, this that Christ speaks is most certainly false; for, saith he, *I will in no wise cast you off*; that is, upon no consideration

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ſideration will I caſt you off. You ſay, upon this conſideration, I am ſo abominably vile, there will be caſting off; if this you ſay be true, that which Chriſt ſaith, muſt be falſe; there is a point-blank contradiction between theſe two; and, therefore, either Chriſt muſt call in theſe words again, thus generally delivered, and he muſt put in this exception that you put in, or elſe his word and yours cannot agree.

You ſay, upon ſuch conſiderations, there is no admittance; and upon ſuch and ſuch there is admittance; Chriſt ſaith, *I will in no wiſe caſt you out;* notwithſtanding this conſideration, I will receive you, be you what you will, do but come, and, for all that, you ſhall be welcome.

But, ſome will ſay, men muſt be fitted for Chriſt, before he will ever own them.

I anſwer again, Is there this exception put into the grant of Chriſt, Except you be fitted for me, I will caſt you out? Then you may ſay indeed, except you be fitted for him he will caſt you out; but then, I ſay, how can this be true, *I will in no wiſe caſt him out?* The words muſt run thus, *Him that comes to me,* (if he be fitted and prepared) *I will in no wiſe caſt out;* but if he be not fitted and prepared, I will caſt him out; but do they run ſo? Chriſt looks not for fitneſs, but people may be capable of communion with him, without fitneſs; he takes them into communion with himſelf, and afterwards fits them for it, as he would have them; but, before-hand, there is no fitneſs; ſuppoſe what fitneſs you will, in expecting the grant, I ſay, in expecting

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expecting the grant of Christ, fitness or not fitness is all one; *Come to me, I will in no wise cast you out.*

Peradventure, though the text seems to be clear, yet you will say, Surely the grace of God is not so large as you seem to express it? There must be something expected and considered in the person coming, or there will be no receiving and entertaining by Christ.

I answer, It were an easy thing, (if time would give leave) to shew, that through the whole scripture, the Lord Christ hath such a purpose to set forth the glory of the grace of his Father, as that he will have men know, that all the fitness of persons, to communicate or participate of Christ, is their desperate sinfulness; I say, nothing but sinfulness is that which is the fitness that Christ looks for in men*. I beseech you, peruse that passage, never to be forgotten, (*Ezek.* xvi.) where the Holy Ghost, in the beginning of the chapter, first states the case concerning the condition of persons; then makes the conclusion, the state being granted. Suppose your condition of sinfulness rise up to the height of the illustration there mentioned, of a child polluted in its blood; which kind of expression, the Holy Ghost useth, as that which doth, of all other things in the world, most set out the loathsome nastiness, and intolerable filthiness of sin in men; *Thy father was an* Amorite, *thy mother was an* Hittite; *in the day of thy*

* Not what makes a soul lovely to Christ, but what makes Christ necessary and suitable to that.

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nativity thy navel was not cut, thou waſt polluted in thy blood, neither waſt thou waſhed with water to ſupple thee, thou waſt not ſalted at all, nor ſwaddled at all; and no eye pitied thee, to do any of theſe things unto thee; but thou waſt caſt out, to the loathing of thy perſon. Here is the nature of the ſinfulneſs of perſons polluted in blood. There was ſuch a filthy loathſomeneſs in this pollution, that it was beyond the pity of any creature; it was ſo abominably filthy, that there was no place for pity; nay, more, ſuch pollution of blood there was, that did occaſion caſting out, as if the abiding of that perſon in the room any longer, would poiſon all the reſt; and, therefore, becauſe there could not be an enduring of that loathſomeneſs any longer, there muſt be flinging out upon the dunghill.

Suppoſe your ſins riſe to this very height, and there is ſuch a ſtench of filthineſs in them, that all the world ſhould even vomit to think of that ſinfulneſs that you have acted and committed;—what of all this? Surely, you will ſay, there is no portion in Chriſt for me, as long as my caſe is ſuch a caſe as this. Obſerve the ſtrange expreſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, *When I paſſed by thee, and ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, Live;* there is a great deal of difference between ſaying, *Live*, and *caſting out* of ſuch perſons; when no eye pitied thee, that time which was the time of thy blood, *that time was the time of love.* This is ſtrange indeed, that all the creatures in the world ſhould turn againſt ſuch a perſon, as ſhould be

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be so abominable, that men should abhor him; and yet the time of such pollution, should be Christ's time of love. Well, but you will say, Surely, before Christ will communicate himself, and give up himself to such men, for all this, the case must be altered with them; you shall see it is no such matter, but directly the contrary; *Thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.*— What strange expressions are here! Methinks your hearts cannot but be wrapped up into heaven, in admiration of them: these the Lord aggravates to the highest terms that can be imagined; setting forth the most horrible loathsomeness of the sinfulness of men; and yet that time of sinfulness, was the time of God's love; and not only so, but a time wherein God sware to, and entered into covenant with this person, and became his.

But, you will say, there was some cleansing before. You shall see the Holy Ghost in the next words makes it appear it is not so; mark the words well, *Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood:* then, when I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine. Here was not first a washing, and then swearing, and entering into covenant; but there was first swearing and entering into covenant, and then washing with water afterwards: here is a coming and closing with Jesus Christ, even while the state of a person is the filthiest in the world; and I tell you, beloved, either you must close with

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with Chriſt for your comfort, unworthy as you are, or you muſt never receive him while you live. *Chriſt came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* You that will bring righteouſneſs with you to be received of Chriſt; I tell you, he came not to ſave ſuch perſons; *Chriſt came to ſave that which was loſt: he died for the ungodly,* Rom. v. 6.

But, you will ſay, for all this high aggravation of loathſomeneſs of ſinfulneſs, my caſe is worſe than all this that you ſpeak of; therefore there is ſomething in my condition, that if I come to Chriſt he muſt caſt me off; here is nothing but poſitive filthineſs: it is true, indeed, this condition is very bad, but my caſe riſes higher; beſides a poſitive loathſomeneſs in myſelf, I am a rebel, a ſturdy enemy, I fight againſt God, I quarrel with him, and take up arms againſt him. Imagine your condition a condition of as great enmity and madneſs againſt God, as your hearts can poſſibly deviſe; what then? Sure you will ſay, if I be ſuch an enemy, I muſt lay down arms before Chriſt will have to do with me, or admit me to come to him. Will a king let a cut-throat traitor, while he hath thoughts in his heart to murder him, will he let him come with a naked knife into his preſence, and graciouſly embrace him in his arms?

For anſwer, Still ſee the cloſe of the text, obſerve that if this be true, that in reſpect of this rebelliouſneſs in thy ſpirit againſt God, thou ſayeſt, if I come, Chriſt will caſt me off; theſe words [*in no wiſe*] cannot be true; for here is a con-

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conſideration, as before, that makes an exception, and ſo fruſtrates thy entrance to Chriſt, though there be coming.

Beloved, do you think it was out of the thoughts of Chriſt, to wit, your enmity, and rebellion? — And if he thought of it, do you think he would not have put it in? Surely he was wiſe enough, and knew what he ſaid, and certainly had rebelliouſneſs itſelf in his thoughts when he ſpake the words, *in no wiſe;* and certainly this ſhall not prejudice you, but if you come to Chriſt, he is as much yours as if you never took up arms againſt him.

But to clear up this truth to you more fully, look into *Pſal.* lxviii. 18. *Thou haſt aſcended up on high, and haſt led captivity captive, and thou haſt received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* Mark it well; you ſay there is no dwelling for Chriſt with rebels, that is your poſition; I am a rebel, there can be no entertainment with him for me: but, ſaith the text (note it I pray) *He received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* If that be not clear enough, look into *Rom.* v. 6, 7, 8. *If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we ſhall be ſaved;* mark the expreſſion, it is a ſtrange one; you muſt directly deny the truth of what the apoſtle ſays, if you will ſtand to this principle, that as long as you are enemies there is no admittance unto Chriſt for you; for, ſaith the text, *While we were enemies,*

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mies, we were reconciled; not that Chriſt provided reconciliation for enemies, that when they be amended, they ſhall be ſaved, but during enmity itſelf they receive reconciliation.

I do not ſpeak this to the intent that any ſhould conceive that God leaves perſons rebellious, vile, and loathſome, as he finds them *, when he cloſeth with them; but, I ſay, at that time when the Lord cloſeth with perſons, he cloſeth with them in ſuch a ſtate of rebellion; and if thou comeſt to Chriſt in this condition, it manifeſtly ſhall appear to thee, that he will open his boſom † for thy head to reſt upon, as well as for the moſt righteous perſon in the world, and his breaſt for thy mouth to ſuck ‡.

He ſhuts the door to none that comes; *Ho! every one that thirſteth, let him come and drink of the water of life freely.* Let *every one*; there is not one exempted; Yet, *not I*, ſaith one, *not I*, ſaith another; but the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *let every one come.* No man under heaven that hath a heart to come, and ſuck of the breaſts of Chriſt, but the way is free for him; the fountain is ſet open for all ſin and uncleanneſs: at the pool of *Betheſda* every impotent perſon might ſtep in; at the bath the pooreſt man in the world may go, if he will, and ſtep in; neither is the loathſomeſt perſon in the

* And it ſhould be obſerved, that all before ſpoken, is ſaid to ſuch who are deemed ſenſible of their rebellion and vileneſs; and alſo under ſome temptations that Chriſt will not receive them, being ſo very ſinful.

[† *John* xiii. 25. *Cant.* viii. 5.]

[‡ *Iſa.* lxvi. 11, 12.]

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world excluded; now Christ is that bath opened for all comers; there is no comer shall ever be cast off; I dare be bold to say, there never did miscarry any person in the world that indeed did come to him; if there did any miscarry, there is no credit to be given to the words of Christ himself.

But I see I must hasten: I come to consider the power of this expression to persons that had the light risen to them, but think now darkness is come over them again; I mean those that have received Christ, and have believed, but something or other hath happened, that even they suspect, that if they should come to him, he would cast them off. But if the first proposition be granted, that is discussed, then much more this: *He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things?* Rom. viii. 32. *If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled shall we be saved by his life*, Rom. v. 10. If while we are without strength, Christ in due time died for the ungodly; if while we were sinners he died for us, how much more shall we be saved from wrath being reconciled! All this is to shew, that if Christ did not shut out persons in the worst condition, when they had no acquaintance at all with him, much less will he cast out those that he hath had familiarity with in former times; there is no condition in the world a believer is subject to, that may occasion the least suspicion

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ſuſpicion that Chriſt will caſt him out, if he come.

But you will ſay, Suppoſe a believer falls into ſome ſcandalous ſins, and notorious ſins, it may be to commit murder and adultery together, as *David* did; ſurely now there is ſome cauſe of ſuſpicion, that if he come preſently to Chriſt after he commits theſe things, he will ſend him packing. I anſwer, If this be true, there muſt be a putting in of this exception into the text, If thou that art a believer commit ſuch and ſuch a ſin, though thou comeſt to me, I will caſt thee out; and if it be ſo, Chriſt muſt cut off that large expreſſion of his, *I will in no wiſe caſt thee out.*

You will ſay, this is ſtrange doctrine: ſuppoſe a believer commit adultery, and murder, may he preſently look upon Chriſt, and in him ſee a diſcharge of his ſins, and reconciliation by him, and part in him, at that very time he commits them? Surely there muſt be large humiliation, and confeſſion of theſe ſins; and there muſt be a long continuance in this too; he muſt not apply comfort preſently; there muſt be more brokenneſs of heart yet, and more yet, and more yet: this is the objection of the world.

I anſwer, I confeſs the crime is great in its kind, and, for the preſent, it may ſilence the voice of truth itſelf; but whatever becomes of it, that Chriſt may have the glory of his grace, and the glory of that fulneſs of redemption wrought all at once; let me tell you, believers cannot commit thoſe ſins that may give juſt occaſion of ſuſpicion

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to them, that if they come to Chriſt he would caſt them out: let me not be miſtaken in that I ſay; I know the enemies of the goſpel will make an evil conſtruction of it; yet a believer, I ſay, cannot commit thoſe ſins that can give occaſion to him to ſuſpect, that if he come preſently to Chriſt, he would caſt him off.

But muſt not he confeſs firſt, and be afflicted in his ſoul, before he can think he ſhall be received if he come?

For anſwer to it; I deny not, but acknowledge, when a believer ſins, he muſt confeſs theſe ſins; and the greateſt end and ground of this confeſſion is that which *Joſhua* ſpeaks concerning *Achan*, *Joſh.* vii. 19. *My ſon, confeſs thy faults, and give glory to God.* A believer in confeſſion of ſin gives glory to the great God of heaven and earth; and that muſt be the glorious end of the confeſſion of his ſin, that God may be owned, as the ſole and only Saviour: except we acknowledge ſin, we cannot acknowledge ſalvation: we cannot acknowledge any virtue in the works and ſufferings of Chriſt; he might have ſaved his labour, and never come into the world; all that he did could not be acknowledged to be of worth to us, if there had not been ſin from which he ſhould ſave us: he that indeed confeſſes his ſin, confeſſes he had periſhed if Chriſt had not died for him; nay, he confeſſeth, that nothing in the world, but Chriſt, could ſave him.

Secondly, I grant, a believer ſhould be ſenſible of ſin, that is, of the nature of it; but this is that

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that I mainly desire to imprint upon your spirits, that he may certainly conclude, even before confession of sin, the reconciliation that is made between God and him, the interest he hath in Christ, and the love of Christ embracing him: in a word, before a believer confesses his sin, he may be as certain of the pardon of it, as after confession*. I say, there is as much ground to be confident of the pardon of sin to a believer, as soon as ever he hath committed it, though he hath not made a solemn act of confession, as to believe it after he hath performed all the humiliation in the world. What is the ground of the pardon of sin? *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own name's sake:* here is pardon, and the fountain of it is in God himself. What is it that discharges a believer? the rise of it is God's own sake: if this be the ground of pardon, then this being held out, a believer may be assured of pardon as soon as he commits any sin, and may close with it. Pardon of sin depends upon the unchangeableness of God, and not on the stability

* Not that confession of sin is a needless thing; the Doctor has before observed, that when a believer sins, he must confess his sins, and points out the ends for which confession is to be made; but then he is not to consider this as the ground or cause of the forgiveness of sin; but being under a sense of sin committed, is at once to look to Christ, and deal with his blood for the pardon of it; and not stay until a solemn, formal confession, is made, as if his pardon depended on that: we are to confess sin, as *Aaron* confessed the sins of *Israel*, over the scape-goat; and we should confess ours over a sin-bearing Saviour, with a view to their being laid on him, and satisfied for, by him; and never does a soul more ingenuously confess sin, or more kindly mourn for it, than when he has the clearest view of the free, and full forgiveness of it, by the blood of Christ.

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of the creature: all the pardon in the world that any perſon ſhall enjoy, is revealed in this word of grace: and it is the moſt abſurd thing in the world to think that the ſoul may fetch out a pardon any where, but in the word of grace. Is pardon held out in it, and held out to ſinners, as they are ſinners? And doth God hold out his love to perſons before good or evil be done by them, that the purpoſe of God may ſtand according to election, not of works, but of grace? And doth a believer find it thus in the word of grace, and may not he reſt upon it when he finds it? I beſeech you conſider; either Chriſt did not reckon with the Father for all the ſins of his people one with another, when he did offer up himſelf, or he did; if he left out ſuch and ſuch a ſcandalous ſin when he reckoned with him, then Chriſt did not ſave to the utmoſt all them that come to God by him; then there muſt come another ſaviour, to reckon for that which he left out.

Well, you will ſay, Chriſt did reckon for all ſin with his Father; if he did reckon with him for all, then did he pay him the full price for every one, when he died upon the croſs. Then the Father being paid, ſatisfaction was acknowledged from his hand; he hath beheld the travail of his ſoul, and he is ſatisfied; *And the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin*, 1 John i. 7. Well, doth God acknowledge full ſatisfaction for all ſin under hand and ſeal? If it be ſo, what ground is there of ſuſpicion that Chriſt will not receive you, but caſt you off for ſuch and ſuch tranſgreſſions, rather

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ther than for such and such? If the reckoning were for all, wherefore do you make such a distinction, where God makes none? If it be made for all, one with another, and the price be paid for all, wherein comes the ground of suspicion? Hath God taken pay for all, and doth that sin, being committed, appear before him still? And must he have more than Christ hath paid? Do not entertain such base thoughts of him. There is not a sin committed this day, but it was as clear before God from all eternity, with all the aggravation, as it is now; and, when God reckoned with Christ for the sins of believers, he took into his consideration the utmost extent of every sin, what it would rise unto, and took a price answerable to the nature and quality of them, of his Son; be they small or great, be they what they will, the price was raised by the Father upon the back and score of Christ, answerable to the transgression.

Now, hath Christ paid all to the utmost farthing? how comes God then to put in this as an exception, as if now there were something done that requires something more than what Christ hath done, before God and you can be friends?

You will say paradventure, In all this will we directly strike at all manner of meeting with God in humiliation and prayer, and fasting and confession of sins.

I answer, with the apostle, *Do we herein make void the law? God forbid! yea, rather, we establish it.* May not a person come and acknowledge his fault to his prince, after he hath received his par-

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don under his hand, when he is brought from the place of execution? Nay, may not he acknowledge it with melting and extreme bitterneſs of ſpirit, becauſe he knoweth he hath a pardon? It is but a ſordid and groſs conceit in the heart of men to think, that there can be no humiliation for ſin, except they be in deſpair; I ſay, that when Chriſt reveals himſelf to your ſpirits, you ſhall find your hearts more wrought upon, with ſweet meltings, relentings, and breakings of ſpirit, when you ſee your ſins pardoned, than in the moſt deſpairing condition you can be in. It hath been often taken notice of, of many malefactors, that though when they have come to the place of execution their hearts have been ſo hard that they could not ſhed a tear; yet, when they have heard their pardon read, and ſeen themſelves out of danger, their hearts, that were ſo hard before, have melted into floods of tears: and ſo, I ſay, that heart that could not relent to ſee the filthy loathſomeneſs of ſin, while he did not ſee his pardon, yet, after the knowledge of that, melts into tears, and hath ſuch relenting that none in the world can have, but he that knoweth it: I ſay, *The grace of God, which brings ſalvation, having appeared unto men, doth more teach them to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent world,* than all the arguments beſides can perſuade men, even for the glory of their God, the manifeſtation of their thankfulneſs to him, and the being fruitful unto others. We are to walk in every way that God hath chalked out unto us; but if we think our righteouſneſs,

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righteouſneſs, deep humiliation, large relents of ſpirit, ſorrow for ſin, and our confeſſion thereof, muſt make our way to the bowels of Chriſt, take heed leſt you ſet up a falſe Chriſt. When you bring any thing to Chriſt, you deprive him of that which is his greateſt prerogative, and give it to your faſting and humiliations; it is the prerogative of Chriſt alone to bring you to himſelf. But, you will ſay, all the promiſes of pardon run with this proviſo, in caſe men humble themſelves, and do this and that, then pardon is theirs; but otherwiſe it is none of theirs; take heed of ſuch doctrine. We have had *Arminianiſm* exceedingly exploded among us hitherto, and there hath been much complaint againſt it; but if we conceive that God, in pardoning ſin, hath an eye to confeſſion of it, here is the doing of works for pardon of ſin; and how far ſhort this comes of *Arminianiſm*, let all the world judge.

Beloved, conſider I beſeech you, doth God give grace upon obedience? What power ſhall work ſuch a diſpoſition? ſuppoſing a branch be a branch of the wild vine that is mentioned in the prophet *Iſaiah*, ſuch a branch as there is death in it, what ſhall alter the nature of that deadneſs in t? Muſt not there be an ingrafting of it into the true vine? muſt not the wild olive be put into the ſweet olive, before it ceaſe to be wild, and become a good branch? You muſt know, that we are all wild vines, bringing forth fruit unto death; how ſhall our qualities be changed? Muſt we be changed firſt, and then, being changed, come to Chriſt? Is it not Chriſt, the vine, who by virtue of

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our union to himself, doth change our corrupt and bad natures? Do you think, that a branch of the wild olive, must become a branch of the true olive before it can be put into it, and then, in regard of that, be put into it? Oh! that the order of Christ may be established with you; namely, his beginning to close with men in blood, and the power of Christ thus beginning with them, framing their spirits to himself, in such a manner, that neither men, nor angels, nor any other creature, can frame any spirit for him, till he come himself. It is certain, *without* him *you can do nothing*; as he saith of himself, *John* xv. 5. and as the apostle confesseth of himself, *Rom.* vii. 18. How will you, therefore, have gracious or previous dispositions and qualifications, as you call them, before Christ can own you; when as it must be Christ, and he given, that must frame these dispositions in you? You must, you say, have eyes to see your folly and misery, and be humbled in the sense thereof, and hearts to close with Christ, and then he will become yours. How contrary is this, to the Lord, by his prophet, *Isa.* xlii. *I give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes?* — Who opens these blind eyes, but Christ, as he is given for a covenant to open them? Can men see either their own folly, or behold their need of him, or conceive the sweetness of him, while they are stark blind? They are stark blind, till Christ, after he is given for a covenant, opens the eyes of men. To think that men have their eyes opened before they come to Christ, whereas, when they come

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come to him, he opens them, is to ſay, we ſee when we are blind.

You ſhall ſee, in ſcripture, that Chriſt is given ſo freely to men, that all conſiderations are taken away from them, that all diſcouragements may be taken from a ſinner, that if he come to him, and cloſe with him, if he have a heart, he may come without bar.

To conclude: If there be any willingneſs in thee to cloſe with Chriſt, ſo that fain thou wouldeſt cloſe with him if thou mighteſt; I ſay, thou may'ſt receive all the embraces of Chriſt into thy arms, and receive his kiſſes* upon thy mouth, with as much boldneſs, and confidence, as any believer in the world; for it is not for their ſakes, for their amendments and reformation, their righteouſneſs or holineſs, that Chriſt hath mercy on them; but for his own ſake it is that he embraces them, and manifeſts his love unto them.

* Kiſſes, as they are indications of, ſo they are incentives to love. When the truths of the goſpel come with power upon a ſinner's heart, they let in, not only a great deal of light, but alſo a large meaſure of love; faith comes hereby, and that works by love, both to Chriſt and to his goſpel.

SER-

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SERMON XV*.

Our Righteouſneſs Loſs and Dung.

PHILIPPIANS iii. 8, 9.

Yea, doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and count them but dung, that I may win Chriſt. And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.

THE main drift of this apoſtle in the whole courſe of his miniſtry, is not only to ſet out Chriſt, but alſo to ſet him alone; ſtripping man, and all things elſe, ſtark naked; leaving not a rag to cover, or a plaiſter to eaſe, or heal any jot of that univerſal leproſy overſpreading man; that Chriſt alone may be all in all: which, through Chriſt's aſſiſtance, we will endeavour to unriddle

* Here begins the Second Volume in the former editions.

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unto you; (being a riddle indeed unto too many, who think they see all in it with a glance) ploughing with this heifer of the apostle, I mean the text I have read unto you. Now, that you may the more clearly see the whole scope he aims at here, you must well mark the coherence, how the foregoing discourse leads him unto what he here asserts: in verse 2. he gives warning to take heed of dogs, evil workers, and the concision. In verse 3. he intimates in what regard we should beware of them, namely, in not entertaining their principles, which lead to a confidence in the flesh; and for the better establishing or settling them and us in this his useful advice, he shews the vanity and simplicity of such confidence, by comparing himself with the exactest of them, verse 4. where he clears what he means by the flesh, in which we ought not to have confidence, reducing it unto two heads; 1. External church-privileges; 2. An answerable conformity of life according to the law; in both which, he dares challenge any of them to come near him, especially in the latter branch of the flesh; where note, that he as well calls his zeal and blamelessness touching the righteousness which is in the law, the flesh, as the other, wherein if there were any cause of confiding, he had more than any of them, verse 4. I say, as well that as his being a circumcised *Jew*, and a Pharisee. Now in verse 7. he intimates indeed that he was once of their mind; to account those things (which he now finds to be but flesh) gain; but for his part, whatever they were in his eye before,

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fore, he ſees and ſo counts them but loſs for Chriſt. In the words of my text he handles this his laſt aſſertion more fully, wherein he propoſes his own happy diſcovery and invaluable ſucceſs, as a pattern and encouragement for us to follow him. — *Firſt*, He demoliſhes and throws away all the glittering, but yet rotten materials, wherewith he had, and others ſtill do erect a fortreſs of ſecurity, and palace of delight; then he declares the end of his rejecting thoſe materials, ſo much hiſſed at, not only by the world, but even by many devout ones alſo; namely, that he might lay a ſure foundation, and build an impregnable tower that cannot be ſhaken; like a wiſe maſter-builder, who finding that he hath built upon the ſand, with hay and ſtubble, pulls down all, and caſts it on the dunghill, and then finds a rock, and rears a ſtructure with tried ſtones from it, which will not moulder with weather-beating; ſo that he doth not only exhibit Chriſt with his righteouſneſs, as the ſecureſt city of refuge, but alſo ſhews plainly, that all muſt down to the ground and be loſt, and then begin anew with him only; one old rotten poſt left, will cauſe all the new building to ſink.

Concerning the firſt buſineſs of pulling down the old houſe, obſerve, 1. What materials they are which he ruinates; the apoſtle expreſſeth this in theſe general terms, [*all things*] now theſe things have a reference to thoſe materials mentioned before, namely, his church privileges and legal blameleſſneſs; but yet he ſpeaks more largely here, than only of thoſe; his meaning is, that he did not

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not only caſt away as dung, what he was or could do before he received Chriſt, but even all things whatever alſo he hath been able to do ſince he received him, though aſſiſted thereunto by his Spirit, as *Beza* well obſerves on this place. 2. Note, what he doth with theſe materials; he doth not glaze them, and let them ſtand, nor pull them down and poliſh them, and then patch up a new building with old materials; no, nor yet cull out the choiceſt of thoſe his glittering works, to mingle them with Chriſt's, but throws all, even every jot away; he ſees no worth in any, no not the beſt; nay, more, he ſees the very beſt ſo far from ſervice, or profit, that indeed he confeſſes all is loſs to him; he means more than that he muſt loſe all his coſt and labour thereabout; but muſt alſo be a great loſer himſelf thereby: nay, he goes further, and tells us, that all his works are no better materials for his ſpiritual building, than as if a man ſhould build a houſe, and uſe no other materials, than the filth of a jakes or dung, though his works be blameleſs; for thus he ſaith, I count them but dung, and ſo he caſts them all on a dunghill: that he means his own blameleſs works, which he thus looks on as loſs and dung, is moſt plain by that other expreſſion of his, *Not having mine own righteouſneſs which is of the law.*

As concerning the apoſtle's end of thus ſtripping himſelf naked, and caſting away his own, though ſpecious works, in general, it is to be cloathed with white robes, even the garments of ſalvation; but more eſpecially he declares his ends to be,

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be, 1. The excellency of the knowledge, or the knowledge of the excellency of Chriſt; (for the knowledge itſelf hath no excellency but in reference to him known) as if he ſhould ſay, I could never come to know how excellent Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is, till all I was and am, plainly appear to be loſs and dung; my own righteouſneſs was a thick film over my eyes, that I could not ſee Chriſt's worth. 2. Another end was ſomething more, namely, a gaining or winning of Chriſt, (ινα κερδησω) importing, that as long as his obedience was in requeſt with him, and ſeemed any thing better than dung in his eye, he could never get Chriſt. 3. An end yet a little higher; the latter aimed at the preſent, this laſt at the future; namely, that he might be found (that is, at the great day of appearance) in him; as if he ſhould ſay, My works being but dung, will give an ill ſavour at the laſt, and therefore I muſt caſt them away, that I may be found in Chriſt, who is all and only ſweetneſs; if my obedience come near, it will change the ſcent, and mar all: that this is the meaning is plain, by his own expounding of himſelf in the following words, *(Not having mine own righteouſneſs,* &c.) from all which obſerve we,

I. That all things, yea even the moſt blameleſs walking according to God's law, not only before, but after converſion, or receiving Chriſt, are truly counted loſs and dung in a *Paul*'s eye, and ſuch a one will be willing to ſuffer the loſs thereof, as of dung.

II. Then, and not till then, a perſon attains to the knowledge of the excellency of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord,

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Lord, gains him, is *found in him* (or ſo minded as is expreſſed in the former doctrine) *not having his own righteouſneſs, but the righteouſneſs of God which is by faith in Chriſt.*

I begin with the firſt; and, becauſe, at firſt ſight, peradventure, to ſome, it may poſſibly ſeem harſh, pray mark how clearly and fully every tittle of it is founded on the text. *Firſt*, Obſerve how the apoſtle ſaith expreſsly, that he therefore *counts all loſs and dung*, that he may attain thoſe excellencies mentioned; what need that, if he might attain theſe without ſuch an eſtimation? Again, obſerve the generality of this expreſſion, *All things*, which is more than the particulars mentioned; and further, note the time when he ſpake this, it was certainly after his converſion to Chriſt, *Phil.* i. 13. for he had been in bonds for him before this; now, that which he here ſpeaks of their loſs and filthineſs, is in the preſent tenſe; he delivers his mind of them as viewed at that inſtant; and, in ſpecial, mentions his own righteouſneſs as part of that dung he would not be found in; and, whereas it might be objected, that he had not now received Chriſt as yet, becauſe this he did to gain him; it is moſt plain he was in him already, by what he ſaid before; beſides, nothing is clearer than that he was converted immediately before he received and entered into his apoſtleſhip, as is plain, in *Acts* ix. 2, 3. his meaning here muſt needs be of fuller degrees of participation of Chriſt. The prophet *Iſaiah*, ſuch another evangelic man as *Paul*, comes nothing ſhort of him in ſpeaking of his own righteouſneſs, and other

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other ſervants of God, ſaying, *But we are all as an unclean thing*, (he means a jakes) *all our righteouſneſs are as filthy rags, or as a menſtruous cloth*, Iſa. lxiv. 6. he makes himſelf one of this number.— Our bleſſed Saviour, who well knew what was in man, bids us, when we have done all things which are commanded us, ſay, *We are unprofitable ſervants*, Luke xvii. 10.

For the better clearing of this truth, let us conſider, 1. What it is to count all things as loſs and dung. 2. What it is to ſuffer the loſs of all things. 3. How it may appear that all things, even the moſt blameleſs works, are but loſs and dung in a renewed eſtate, and in what reſpect they are ſo.

1. This word [*count*] hath two different ſignifications; ſometimes an opinion falſely grounded, as in that ſaying of the apoſtle, *We are counted the offſcouring of the world*; ſometimes (as here) a certain determination infallibly grounded; thus doth a *Paul*'s eye determine, (I mean a perſon like-minded with him, and right-ſighted as he.) Now this determination, or eſtimation of things as loſs and dung, is not of ſome only, but of all. Many will not ſtick to count thoſe things, that are directly againſt any precept, to be loſs and dung; but this ſentence muſt paſs further, even to all civility, morality, yea, and the moſt exact obedience to any or all the precepts of the law; (if it be poſſible) when ſuch obedience hath had the moſt aſſiſtance of the Spirit, the beſt aim at the right end, done after the moſt enlarged manner, with all other good circumſtances, to the utmoſt height

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height a creature can here mount unto; all theſe things, or whatever elſe, the pureſt ſanctified ſearcher upon earth (being mere man) can bolt forth from his heart, muſt be counted but as *loſs and dung*; otherwiſe a *Paul* cannot ſay, I count *all things* ſo, if any one thing may be excepted.

But let me not be miſtaken here, I do not ſay, that the motions themſelves of the Spirit, or the enlargement of the heart as his, or the ends aimed at as preſcribed, muſt be thus counted; but the whole work as, and when, done by a ſanctified perſon, though ſo aſſiſted by the Spirit; when ſuch a man looks on the works ſo done by him, he muſt ſee nothing but mere *loſs and dung*. I hope your patience will ſtay your thoughts and reaſonings, till I can come to ſhew for what reſpects it muſt be ſo.

In the mean time let us conſider, what it is to count them *loſs and dung*. It is worth your obſervation, that the apoſtle doth not ſay *loſs* only; for, then, a man were in no worſe caſe but to have his labour for his pains, (as the proverb is) that is, he ſhould only loſe his pains, or the work he is about; but he ſaith *loſs*, that is, by the beſt work that ever a mere man did, he himſelf is a great loſer; I mean, that he forfeits life and bliſs thereby on earth, and in heaven alſo; there is ſin enough in it, (if God had nothing elſe but what he can pick out of the beſt work) to lay to his charge, to forfeit all and more, even to caſt him into utter darkneſs; I ſpeak in regard of the defert of ſuch a work in itſelf conſidered; under the notion

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notion of ſuch loſs muſt we look on, and account all things; and not only as loſs, but as dung alſo, which comprehends the cauſality of this loſs in ſuch works. Dung, you know, is one of the filthieſt and loathſomeſt things in the world, cauſing offence to thoſe eſpecially in whoſe face it is caſt. All things of ours, even the beſt, are of this nature, nay infinitely worſe, (for no created natural filth can ſufficiently ſymbolize with ſpiritual;) I ſay, therefore, that all our righteouſneſs, at beſt, is ſuch a menſtruous cloth in God's eye, and ſo certainly in itſelf; there is dung caſt in his face, even in *new moons, and ſabbaths, and ſolemn aſſemblies**; ſo that his ſoul hates them, they are a burthen to him, he cannot away with them; they ſend up an ill ſavour into his noſtrils, ſmelling rankly of the fleſh when they proceed from the pureſt heart; there being ſome fleſh luſting againſt the Spirit ſtill; as, namely, ſome ſpiritual, or rather carnal pride, and ſelf-ſtroaking, when a man hath done very well as he thinks; which dung is the promeriting cauſe of the loſs before-mentioned, accompanying all things of ours, even the beſt, which is the infallible ground-work for counting them ſuch.

2. Let us now conſider, what it is to ſuffer this loſs of all things. For clearing hereof note, that there is a double ſuffering loſs of a thing. 1. Paſſive. 2. Active. Or, 1. Violent. 2. Voluntary. A paſſive ſuffering of the loſs of any thing, is, when one is violently bereft of it through an overmatch; as when a man ſuffers the loſs of his

[* Iſa. i. 13.]

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goods by thieves breaking in upon him, and overcoming him: thus ſhall all unbelievers ſuffer the loſs of all things, even their good deeds as they call them, prayers, alms, &c. They ſhall indeed come to Chriſt, and ſay, *Lord, have we not done this, and this, in thy name*, Matt. vii. 22, 23. But their lamb-ſkins in which they walked, ſhall be pulled over their ears, and Chriſt ſhall ſay, *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* But this is not the apoſtle's ſuffering loſs, it is an active or voluntary ſuffering; bear with the terms, though they ſeem contradictory: our Saviour ſpeaks to this effect to *John the Baptiſt*, over modeſtly refuſing to baptize him, *Suffer it to be ſo now*, that is, give way to it; ſo here the apoſtle's ſuffering loſs was a contented giving way to the loſs of all he was and did. Loſs, here, hath not ſo much reference to his perſon, as the things he did; though in ſome reſpect it may be underſtood of his perſon, thus; that he was contented to take ſhame, and even confuſion of face to himſelf, for his beſt actions, and account himſelf worthy to be deſtroyed, and be his own judge, to paſs not only the ſentence of confiſcation of all that he hath, but alſo of condemnation on his perſon, crying out, ταλαι πωρος εγω ανθρωπος, *Oh wretched man that I am!* And, beſides this voluntary ſuffering ſuch perſonal loſs, he is willing to be ſtripped naked of all things, and all pleas they can afford him; ſo as not to have a word to ſpeak for himſelf, except it be in impleading all that ever he had done, as making

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making far more againſt, than for him; ſuch, I take it, is ſuffering the loſs of all things.

3. I come to the next thing propoſed, How it may appear that all things, even the moſt blameleſs works, and that after renovation, are but loſs and dung, and in what reſpect they are ſo. Unto ingenuous ſpirits, a man would think that the text, and other ſcriptures mentioned, might be ſufficiently ſatisfactory; but for better illuſtration ſake, you muſt firſt diſtinguiſh (as I touched before) between that which is the Spirit's in works after renovation, and the whole work after we have done it; and know that though the motions and aſſiſtance of the Spirit, be pure, holy, and without ſcum in the ſpring, to wit, itſelf; yet, by that time theſe motions and aſſiſtance have paſſed through the channels of our hearts, and been mixed with our manifold corruptions in doing, even the whole work thereby becomes polluted and filthy*; our filthineſs alters the property of the

* This is a paſſage excepted to by D. W. in his *Goſpel-Truth ſtated, &c.* p. 196. it is ſadly perverted by him, on which he charges the Doctor with ſaying, "That the greateſt holineſs in believers, though wrought in them by the Holy Ghoſt, is mere dung, rottenneſs and filthineſs, as in them:" whereas the Doctor is not ſpeaking of internal ſanctification of the Spirit on the heart, which is a pure work, and *is all glorious within;* nor can it be mixed with, or be defiled by, our corruptions; but of works done after regeneration, even at the motion, and by the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God; which motions paſſing through the channel of our corrupt hearts, ceaſe to be the Spirit's, and become ours, and mingled with our corruptions are polluted; and ſo the works performed are as dung, and ſo to be accounted, and not to be gloried or truſted in: and yet, notwithſtanding all this, the Doctor obſerves, they ought to be carefully maintained being profitable to

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the pure motions of Christ's spirit: let not this sound harsh, for it is no paradox that a man should defile holy things; you may know that received principle, that one circumstance amiss, mars a good action, and makes it all naught. St. *James* tells us, that *whosoever fulfils* (or whosoever shall keep) *the whole law of God, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all;* his meaning, I take it, is this, that the least drop of our poison, in the least failing, hath such a diffusive venom, that it poisons all the good, and overspreads its filth through the whole, even as one drop of poison injected into the rarest cordial, makes the whole, and every drop of it, mortal; so, that except the best of all our works can pass through us without the least mixture of any defect or pollution of ours, it cannot but be dung. Pour the cleanest water that is into a dunghill, and let it but run through it, and when passed through, what is it but dung itself? The Lord requiring sacrifices of the *Jews*, enjoins a male without blemish; though a male, yet with one blemish, the whole sacrifice was abominable, and not that one blemish only. And whereas it may seem harsh, that even what is the Spirit's, must be involved in a man's own, under the general notion of dung; know, that it once being mixed with our filth, ceaseth to be his, and becomes ours; it was his when injected, but our

to men: yea, that through faith in Christ the dung is extracted, and being purged by him, become acceptable unto God, though not till they are renounced by us, and counted loss and dung; — nay, he affirms, that the motions of the Spirit themselves, the enlargement of the heart, and right aims in working, are not to be so accounted, but the works themselves.

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fleſh, being like the viper's ſtomach, that turns the wholeſomeſt food into poiſon; or like an ulcerous tumour, that turns the ſoundeſt fleſh, drawn thereto, into rottenneſs; and ſome of this ulcerous fleſh remains in the beſt ſaints on earth, and mingles itſelf in the beſt ſervice, and ſo turns the whole into its own nature; for *(omne generans ſibi ſimile generat)* that being dung, all that it diffuſeth itſelf into, muſt needs be like it; even as the gourds gathered from the wild vine, being mortal themſelves, and put into the pot, ſet on for the ſons of the prophets, made the whole pottage deadly, 2 *Kings* iv. 39, 40. The apoſtle *Paul* complains, that even when he would do good, evil was preſent with him, through the law, in his members, rebelling againſt the law of his mind, which makes him cry out of himſelf bitterly, againſt all he did: *Oh! wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* Rom. vii. 21. 23, 24. By which he muſt needs mean all together, becauſe he doth not fly to good works as a refuge againſt the evil, but to Chriſt alone as a refuge againſt all: *I thank God* (ſaith he) *through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, verſe 25. So then, in reſpect of the inſeparable communicative poiſon of the ingredients of our corruptions, mingling themſelves with the beſt righteouſneſs of the beſt men, both they and that are but loſs and dung, and filthy rags, and muſt be ſo accounted.

Some then may object, if it be ſo, we ought to refrain from doing righteouſneſs, as from dung.

I anſwer, It follows not; but that we muſt refrain from glorying in, or ſtroaking ourſelves

for

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for our righteous doings, and rather take ſhame to ourſelves when we have done, and ſo glory only in the Lord. Though good works done by us are but dung in themſelves, and in God's eye; yet muſt we be careful to maintain them, ſince they are profitable to men, *Tit.* iii. 8. *David* (*Pſal.* xvi. 2, 3.) confeſſeth, that his goodneſs extendeth not to God; yet for all this he refrains not, becauſe it could extend to the ſaints upon earth, and to the excellent in whom was his delight; it is no good plea, that becauſe a man cannot be wholly clean, therefore, he will be more filthy than needs: you will not like it, that becauſe your children cannot come from ſchool without ſome dirt, in the cleaneſt way, that therefore they ſhall wallow like ſwine over head and ears in it.

Others will ſay, That God often ſhews his approbation of good works, which he would not do if they were all dung.

I anſwer, That whatſoever is not of faith is ſin; but as to the believer, all things are clean, ſo through this faith in Chriſt, the whole filth of our works is extracted by him; and he preſenting the ſame purged by himſelf alone, they become accepted with God, *Rev.* viii. 3, 4. but ſimply the works themſelves as done, though never ſo well, are abhorred of God; and Chriſt never takes them to purge them, till we ourſelves wholly renounce them by counting them loſs and dung; and that acceptance procured by him, imports only a liking God takes to them, no efficacy at all

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they have with him. So you have the doctrine sufficiently cleared to you, I hope.

Now, If it be so as you have heard, then (keeping within the bounds of *Paul to Timothy, Not to rebuke an elder, but to entreat him as a father:)* let me have leave, who also am an elder, though unworthy, to beseech the elders with all possible meekness, that they will not magnify man's righteousness, no not when he is in Christ, above what is meet; let me obtain the favour to declare my judgment, when such righteousness of man is so exalted, and the issue of it: It is exalted above what is meet, when high things are spoken of it in its own name, and even in reference to Christ's assistance, and a man's being in him. 1. When it is cried up with rhetorical commendation, ascribing virtue and efficacy to it in its own name: give me leave, I beseech you, whilst I open myself in this particular; man's works are thus cried up and magnified, when (for instance) his prayer, repentance, self-denial, and exact blameless walking, have the high titles of a kind of omnipotency to effect wonders, and are commended as most precious and incomparably excellent, not only in the eye of men, but God; as the things wherein he takes infinite pleasure, proceeding from a sanctified heart; and this whilst there is no name mentioned, but only of these righteous actions in such high praises, as if they carried such a lustre, beauty, and energetical virtue in their own nature; you know the poet's complaint, *Hos ego versiculos feci, tulit alter honores;*

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*sic vos non vobis**: may not Christ justly take up such a complaint? All the comelinesss of man's righteousness, is no more but what he puts upon it, and yet the righteousness must go, he not so much as mentioned or hinted in such praise: there is verily a fault among us in this respect; if any say, that Christ is always to be supposed as principal; I answer, he should be supposed not only as the principal in these praises, but as solely deserving; for all that is praise-worthy is his alone; but why only supposed? Why deserves not he to be named as well as the righteousness? Certainly it is no good manners (to say no worse) to forget him, whilst his poorest instruments are so highly remembered; besides, how can people suppose that which they hear not of? They must go away with things as they are delivered to them; when servants bring presents from their masters to any, they do not say, I bestow such or such a thing on you, but, my master sends it you; if he should take it on himself, he would go for an arrogant fellow; it will not salve the matter, when he is taxed for such arrogancy, to say, My master should have been supposed, when he gave no hint of him. Such kind of extolling man's righteousness is far from counting it loss and dung, as *Paul* doth in my text; methinks, therefore, it were comely in all extolling of it, explicitly to ascribe all the praise to the glory of the grace of Christ.

*I have made these verses, another gets the honors; so you have done, but not for yourselves.

2. Man's

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2. Man's righteouſneſs is exalted above what is meet, when too high things are ſpoken of it, being accompanied with Chriſt's aſſiſtance by his Spirit, and in reference to a man's being in him, when he doth ſuch righteouſneſs.

May I be bold once more to clear my mind in this alſo: it is true indeed, whilſt a believer's heart is overcaſt with groſs vapours, and is more than ordinarily dull in hearing, is low and ſlow in praying, and is ſomewhat ſtiff in faſting above meaſure; ſuch righteouſneſs goes uſually for loſs and dung, and ſuch it is; but if a ſoul gets under full ſail, filled with a gale of the Spirit of Chriſt, when floods of meltings flow from it; if he can cry mightily, be ſwift to hear, greedy in ſucking in divine truths, and ſomewhat exact in obſerving practical righteous means, to mourn and pray luſtily, being helped by the Spirit herein; then ſuch prayers, mournings, and other divine exerciſes will do wonders; hereby men ſhall get pardon, ſettle ſpiritual, civil, and natural healings, with national: ſuch courſes, ſome think, will turn away God's wrath, and reconcile him to men;—but, under favour, the attributing ſuch efficacy to righteouſneſs, though thus aſſiſted by Chriſt's Spirit, is more than is meet, though Chriſt be explicitly owned as the author of ſuch aſſiſtance; the righteouſneſs ſo aſſiſted, hath no efficacy at all to obtain any thing of the Lord, but rather to haſten and multiply wrath, in that it multiplies ſin*.—How

* That is, when it is over-valued, and not renounced, as it ſhould; but ſuch efficacy aſcribed to it, as is not in it, as to turn away

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How can ſin have efficacy towards expiation of ſin, and pacifying a juſt incenſed God for it?—certainly in no reſpect: ſuppoſe a traitor brought in to the prince by a favorite, and taught by him what to ſay, and how to deport himſelf; but the traitor mars his tale, and as he delivers it, it proves new treaſon; can the favorite's aſſiſtance be any ground to hope that this, his new traitorous carriage, ſhall pacify the king, and obtain his pardon? The caſe is like ours in hand: when we come to God, the Spirit perhaps puts a good tale into our mouth, but through our ill managing of it, we make but new treaſon of it; the righteouſneſs with which we come to God, though we bring with it the clean water of the Spirit of Chriſt, to waſh away our old dung; yet there is ſuch filth in the veſſel of our preſent righteous actions, that they do but add dung to dung, inſtead of waſhing it away.

If any ſhall grant, that originally, or *per ſe*, the beſt righteouſneſs obtains nothing, but rather charges man with a new account; but yet inſtrumentally, it obtains what is deſired, being well qualified as before is mentioned.

I anſwer, If it be no more, then I heartily deſire that we ſhould always expreſs it, that the people may clearly underſtand and remember, and be guided explicitly to the fountain itſelf, Chriſt alone: for certainly whilſt he is ſuppreſſed, and

away the wrath of God, and obtain favour of him, to the great neglect of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; otherwiſe the Doctor owns it inſtrumentally obtains good things from and through Chriſt the fountain, and as it has relation to him.

theſe

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theſe inſtruments are reached out without relation to him, who only fills them with all that runs through them, they are but mere empty pits, and dry channels, though never ſo curiouſly cut out.

The iſſue of ſuch over-exalting ſanctified righteouſneſs, is, 1. That by ſuch doating on the efficacy of it, Chriſt himſelf is ſhamefully neglected, and grows too much out of requeſt: here may I a little alter the ſaying, which hiſtorians tell us was heard from heaven, after the church grew into credit; *Religio peperit divitias, & filia devoravit matrem*; I may as truly ſay, *Chriſtus peperit juſtitiam, & filia devoravit matrem*; Chriſt begets righteouſneſs in men, and this exalted as much as in ſuch lies that over-exalt it, is made to devour Chriſt himſelf: juſt as if a king ſhould promote a favorite, and then he ſhould be ſo applauded for his uſefulneſs to the ſubjects, that the king muſt be dethroned, and he crowned in his place. I beſeech you, do but mark how our righteouſneſs, ſo exalted, creeps up, by degrees, into Chriſt's throne, even to the dethroning of him.

In all exigencies and extremities, how naked is the throne of grace (underſtanding grace properly) left without ſuitors! how few followers hath Chriſt himſelf! how rarely are men ſent to ſhelter themſelves under the ſhadow of his wings, whilſt the ſeat of righteouſneſs is thronged! what earneſt outcries for prayers, mournings, faſtings, and ſuch like, to help men at a dead lift! what poſting to them in extremities, as if they kept a court by them-

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themselves! for Christ is seldom heard of, at least not set up on high as to do all; and yet this righteousness is but merely his ministring servant:— what the apostle said of himself, (1 *Cor.* iii. 5.) I may as truly say of the best righteousness best assisted; what is prayer, mourning, fasting, hearing, or the like, but ministers by whom ye believed and received mercy? and if but ministers at best, shall they be greater than the Lord?— Let me not be mistaken, I intend no derogation to righteousness, but to bring it into its own place; namely, to be used as that, where, according to Christ's direction, we may meet with him; from whose hands alone, we are there to expect whatever we pant after according to his will; reserving a submission to be disposed of otherwise, if he see fit.

2. Another issue of such exalting man's sanctified righteousness above what is meet, is Christ's leaving persons to that little or no succour, which this can yield, being made the refuge of men.

I remember what the Lord said to his people, the *Israelites*, bowed down under the hands of the *Philistines*; *Go, and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your trouble*, Judges x. 14. what is it but to make a God of our righteousness, when we choose it to be our refuge in time of need, and then exclude, or take no notice of Christ? *We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss*; building on fervency in prayer to obtain of God, when we should rest only on Christ, without regard to that: doubtless all this fasting, mourn-

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mourning, and praying in theſe times, which I believe no former age could parallel, proſper not ſo well as is expected, becauſe the principal verb is wanting, which can only make good ſenſe of all we ſay or do, Chriſt I mean. Were all ſeaſoned with that ſalt, doubtleſs it would be more ſavoury, that is, cordially and dependingly ſeaſoned with it: *Except you believe*, (ſaith the prophet) *you ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.* Wherefore are we called Chriſtians? Is not that a true axiom, *Denominatio eſt a principaliore?* The name imports that all in us ſhould mainly ſavour of Chriſt; and that no receipt ſhould be made or given, but Chriſt muſt be predominant in it: ſure I am, *Paul* was of this mind, when he ſaid, *I deſire to know nothing among you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.* How can that phyſic work according to expectation, which by the apothecary's heedleſſneſs is deſtitute of that ingredient which was preſcribed to do all in all? it is as if *Hellebore* ſhould be left out of a purge, and nothing ſhould be adminiſtered but what was preſcribed for the taking of it down: Chriſt only is the *Hellebore* that purgeth; prayers are but the liquor to let him down; leave Chriſt out, and what will all the reſt do? Nay, the truth is, as in every ſtrong purge, there are ſome degrees of poiſon, which are quelled by a predominant cordial injected for that purpoſe; ſo our mournings, faſtings, and ſelf-denials, have poiſon in them, ſufficient to ſuffocate a ſoul that takes them, and Chriſt alone is the cordial that quells ſuch poiſon; let him then

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then be left out, and judge I pray you what will be the iſſue.* O, then, whatever elſe we forget in preſcribing and applying receipts for our ſpiritual recoveries, let us be ſure not to forget to put Chriſt into them, leſt we kill inſtead of healing, or poiſon men inſtead of recovering them.

And for the generality of God's people, my advice to them is briefly this; when Chriſt is preſcribed in greateſt quantity, and for ſole efficacy, let them beware, leſt they forget or neglect to put him into their receipts; the portion is deſperate where he is not predominant: and if at any time a ſpiritual phyſician preſcribe any receipt, and forgets Chriſt therein, let them be ſure to ſupply him themſelves before they take it, though the ingredient preſcribed ſeem never ſo rich and ſovereign; and reſolve that theſe of themſelves have too much poiſon in them to be ventured on alone, and therefore will produce but loſs, being dung.

The premiſes conſidered, I beſeech you all, ſuffer a word of exhortation, take ſome good courſe to get a *Paul*'s eye, clearly to ſee loſs and dung in your beſt righteouſneſs, even when your ſails are fulleſt, and your flight ſwifteſt. What courſe muſt we take (will you ſay) to get ſuch an eye to ſee all things thus? 1. Take heed you uſe not falſe ſpectacles whilſt you look on your righteouſneſs; look not through men's eſtimation or applauſe of it, who uſe to be ſomething over-rhetorical in their praiſes. 2. Look not through your own deceitful hearts, which are apt to judge their own brood very fair. 3. Nor through other men's

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men's righteouſneſs, comparing your own with theirs, whoſe copies, at the beſt, are imperfect, and, therefore, cannot fully repreſent righteouſneſs in its complete form; but weigh it impartially in the balance of the ſanctuary; try it by the authentic ſtandard; in brief, lay it to the pattern given in the mount. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, *I was alive without the law once*, (that is, I thought all was right and well, till I came to the law)—*but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died*, Rom. vii. 9. that is, this commandment ſhewed me a world of filth I dreamed not of, by which I ſaw I was a dead man. But, beloved, I confeſs in all this I have but ſet a clear cryſtal glaſs before a blind eye; the law is but materially the diſcoverer of loſs and dung in our beſt righteouſneſs, containing in it the rules of it, and the aberrations from it, which is a book ſealed up and illegible in reſpect of the ſpiritualneſs of it; and, therefore, the ſole efficient of diſcerning loſs and dung in our righteouſneſs, is only that *Lamb who only was found worthy to open the book and unſeal it*, Rev. v. 5——9. Chriſt alone can make a perſon ſee it; and therefore the Lord ſaith, (in *Iſa.* lxii. 6.) *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes.* Chriſt repreſents our beſt righteouſneſs as loſs and dung, two ways:

1. Directly, thus; not only ſhewing us plainly the particulars wherein the filth conſiſts, which he doth by the law; but alſo by giving a right hint of it therein, whereby ſin appears clearly to be out of meaſure ſinful; this he doth by the touch of his

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his omnipotency; this sight of failings in our righteousness, not only as failings, but also under the notion of dung, indeed is the sole work of Christ; not all the means in the world can do it; he, indeed, in the ministry of the gospel, doth it here and there; therefore the apostle *Paul*, (speaking of turning men from darkness to light by the preaching of the gospel) adds, that Christ had sent him to do it. And, therefore, as *Peter* and *John* after they had healed the lame man, seeing the people begin to gaze on them, tell them that they were mistaken, *It was Christ's name, through faith in him, that made him whole*, Acts iii. 12——16. So should all ministers and people, when they attain to a clear sight and sense of dung in the best actions, confess that it is only his name that did it, by a sole absolute power he hath over the hearts of men.

2. Christ gives such clear sight reflexly; I mean comparatively, thus, by shewing that the sole allfulness is in himself; from whence he makes a man argue thus, If all purity be in Christ, then is there none elsewhere in the creature.

SER-

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SERMON XVI.

The two Covenants of Grace.

HEBREWS viii. 6.

But now hath he obtained a more excellent miniſtry, by how much he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes.

THIS epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, as it notably illuſtrates and invincibly maintains the tranſcendent excellencies of Chriſt; ſo the apoſtle, (that he might the more prevalently win the *Jews*) carries the whole diſcourſe of Chriſt in the way they were beſt acquainted with; comparing him, all along, to ſuch things as were uſual among them, and were in greateſt requeſt and of higheſt eſteem with them; as firſt he compares him to angels, then to *Moſes*, and ſo goes along. Now, becauſe he knew that the prieſthood among the *Jews*, and the privileges belonging to it were their oracle and chiefeſt refuge in caſes of greateſt moment and conſequence; he mainly ſets himſelf about

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about this, to ſhew the incomparable excellency of Chriſt's perſonal prieſthood above the moſt glorious excellencies the prieſthood of the *Jews* had.

It is very true, as it ſhall appear by-and-by, that the things of greateſt moment were wrapt up in the privileges of their prieſthood; there they had their remiſſion of ſins, their peace of conſcience, their immunities and ſecurity from danger, ſuch as it was; ſo that if the apoſtle could but make it good, that there was more excellency to be found in Chriſt, than in their greateſt privileges, there was great hope that he might be a miniſter of reconciliation to them; and for this cauſe, you ſhall find, beloved, that he ſpends four whole chapters about nothing elſe but to ſhew what tranſcendent excellencies were to be had from Chriſt himſelf, above the greateſt privileges this moſt glorious ordinance of theirs could bring unto them. The 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th chapters of this epiſtle contain a compariſon between Chriſt and the privileges his prieſtly office brings, with thoſe prieſts, and the privileges their offices brought; and, in the compariſon, moſt clearly ſhew an unſearchable difference between the beſt of theirs, and thoſe Chriſt brings, which were not before in the adminiſtration of their prieſthood.

And, however, for the preſent, a diſcourſe on this ſubject may ſeem impertinent, I doubt not, beloved, but, before I have done, I ſhall make it appear, that it is of as great conſequence to the true members of Chriſt as any that can be delivered,

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livered, I shall endeavour, all the way as I go along, to make sure work, that I may not leave occasion of dispute or contradiction.

In chap. vii. the apostle begins with the order of Christ's priesthood, to shew the excellencies of that above the order of their priesthood; he was a priest after the order of *Melchizedeck*, they after the order of *Aaron*. In chap. viii. ix and x. he passeth from the order, and comes to the business whereabout their several offices were employed; and, concerning their several employments, he finds so large a difference, that although it be true, there was some remission of sins, some peace of conscience in the administration of their priestly office; yet, so far the glory of Christ's office goes beyond theirs, that he sticks not to call their service and administration, when it was at the best, but the very shadow of Christ's; that he doth in the words before my text, and also in chap. x. 1. Nay, he goes further, he finds so great a difference between them, that he doth not stick to make the business of those priests, and of Christ, two distinct covenants, one to succeed in the room of the other. Though Christ be the subject-matter, in general, of both, and remission of sins the fruit of both, yet, such a vast difference is between them, that he makes them two several covenants: and the consequence of this truth is of so much moment, that, until there be a right understanding of it, there will never be any absolute settlement of peace of conscience; but there will still arise

ariſe ſome objections to charge ſin upon the ſoul, which it ſhall never be able to anſwer.

To come to the words of my text, they are the ſum of the whole diſcourſe through all thoſe four chapters; here the apoſtle begins to make his application of the compariſon. Before he had ſhewed what was the employment of thoſe prieſts of the old law; now he comes to ſhew wherein Chriſt excels them; *But now he hath obtained a more excellent miniſtry*, &c.

There are three things conſiderable in the words:

I. The apoſtle's main concluſion.

II. His application and illuſtration of it. And,

III. His confirmation of the truth of it.

1. The main concluſion, in theſe words, *But now he hath obtained a more excellent miniſtry*; wherein there are theſe particulars very conſiderable: 1. the apoſtle limits the office of Chriſt, what it is, he calls it a miniſtry. 2. He ſhews the quality of this office; for, though the term miniſtry may ſeem to be ſomewhat coarſe and low for ſuch a one as Chriſt, yet, he ſhews, it is not ſordid or mean, but an excellent miniſtry. 3. He proceeds to the degree of excellency of it, and that by comparing it with the miniſtry of the prieſts of the old law; it is *a more excellent miniſtry*, that is, than theirs. 4. He ſhews how Chriſt comes by this miniſtry, *He hath obtained* it; and, chap. vii. it is more fully expreſſed; he was made a prieſt by an oath; he was called thereunto by God. 5. Finally, he ſets out the time of Chriſt's exerciſing this miniſtry of his, when it

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began to be on foot: *But now hath he obtained;* intimating, that it is such a one as comes in the place of the other, and begins when that ends.

2. The illustration of this conclusion is in the next words: *By how much he is the mediator of a better covenant;* where you shall find the apostle explaining and opening his conclusion in these particular branches. 1. He explains what the ministry is, he speaks of; he calls it a mediatorship; he is a minister, that is, he is a mediator. 2. He further explains this ministry, by setting forth the subject-matter about which it is employed, he is the mediator of a covenant. 3. He explains wherein this mediatorship of Christ excels that of the old priests; for he said before only, it is more excellent; here he shews wherein it is, namely, *By how much he is the mediator of a better covenant.* 4. He intimates to us that there is a distinct covenant, whereof Christ is the mediator, differing from that, whereof the priest was the mediator: he doth not say, he is the mediator of better things in the same covenant, but of a better covenant: a better and a worse covenant must be two several covenants; better and worse qualities may be in one and the same; but for the covenant itself to be called better than another, is a manifest argument of a double covenant; but of this more anon.

3. The apostle's confirmation of this conclusion is in the last words of the text, *Which was established upon better promises:* where you may note, 1. That these covenants he speaks of, have promises for

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for their foundation: better promiſes in the ſecond, argue good in the firſt; for the word better is comparative, and comparative unto a poſitive, which ſignifies good; promiſes then are the foundation of both theſe covenants; and this is worth the obſervation when we ſhall come to conſider what they are. 2. He proves that Chriſt is the mediator of a better covenant, by two arguments. 1, Though both are founded upon promiſes, yet that which Chriſt is mediator of, is founded upon better, and therefore muſt be a better covenant. 2. Though their covenant was founded upon promiſes, yet was it not eſtabliſhed upon them, much leſs upon better promiſes; but, ſaith the apoſtle, here the covenant that Chriſt mediated was better, in that it was eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes. They were ſweet promiſes whereupon their covenant was confirmed, but they were not ſo durable, but that the covenant itſelf was to ſink, and did ſink to the ground; that was not eſtabliſhed, it was not firm and unchangeable; but the covenant that Chriſt mediated is better; it is an eſtabliſhed one, a covenant that never ſhall be changed or altered, as theirs was. Here are heads enough, I confeſs, to take up a great deal more time than is fit to trouble your patience with; I ſhall not preſume ſo far upon you.

But, that I may, as near as may be, confine myſelf within ſome limits, I ſhall reduce the main principles of all theſe heads unto two things, and confine my diſcourſe only to them.

I. What theſe covenants are, namely, that

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whereof Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be mediator, and that other which is oppoſed unto it.

II. Wherein the covenant whereof Chriſt himſelf is mediator, is better than that which thoſe prieſts did adminiſter.

It may be you may ſee ſome things in the reſolution of theſe, that may be ſome ſatisfaction to your ſpirits.

I. What theſe covenants are, and how diſtinct. I will not meddle with particular covenants, which God made with ſome ſpecial perſons that came not within this compaſs: there are certain general covenants that God made with men; uſually they are reduced to two heads; the firſt is commonly called the covenant of works, firſt made in innocency; the terms thereof are of a double nature, *Do this and live;* and *curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them;* life upon doing, a curſe upon not doing; in ſum, the covenant of works ſtands upon theſe terms, that in perfect obedience there ſhould be life; at the firſt failing therein, no remedy, no admittance of remiſſion of ſins upon any terms in the world; Chriſt cannot come in, nor be heard upon the terms of the covenant of works. There is a ſecond general covenant, and that is uſually called, a new covenant, or a covenant of grace; and this, in oppoſition to the other, ſtands only in matter of grace without works through Chriſt: This, as far as I can find, is generally received to be the right diſtribution of the covenants of God; the covenant

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nant of grace being moſt commonly taken for one entire covenant from firſt to laſt; now to draw it to our purpoſe; if this diſtribution be good, the iſſue at length muſt be this; ſeeing there are two covenants ſpoken of here by the apoſtle, which we ſhall make good by-and-by, they muſt needs be referred to that diſtribution of thoſe two heads, and ſo the ſum muſt be this; the covenant of grace being better than the covenant of works, Chriſt muſt be the mediator of it; and then there remains no other, whereof thoſe prieſts were mediators, but that of works.

For my own part, beloved, I ſhall not take upon me to cenſure any man's judgement; only I ſhall deſire to propoſe ſomething to the conſideration of the wiſe, who, upon deliberate advice, may ſee ſomething worth their meditation: to me it ſeems moſt plain, that the oppoſition the apoſtle here makes, is not between the covenant of works and that of grace; and that he, in all this diſcourſe, hath not the leaſt glance upon the covenant of works at all, nor doth he meddle with it: You know, beloved, that the articles of that covenant, are drawn up in the decalogue of the moral law; and in all this diſcourſe, from chap. vii. 1. to the end of chap. x. the apoſtle doth not ſo much as take notice of the moral law, nor hath he to do one jot with any clauſe of it; all the oppoſition here is not between Chriſt and *Moſes*, but between prieſt and prieſt, office and office; Chriſt is a prieſt after the order of *Melchizedeck*, they prieſts after the order of *Aaron*; Chriſt is the miniſter

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miniſter of a perfect covenant, they of an imperfect one: now, if it were between the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace, then he ſhould have gone on with the covenant of works, and the articles of that, and ſet them in oppoſition unto Chriſt, which he doth not.

But it may be, ſome will ſay, if there be a diſtinct difference between covenants, ſurely then they can be no other but theſe two of grace and works, and therefore the oppoſition muſt needs be between them.

Beloved, give me leave to anſwer freely, the whole adminiſtration of that covenant, which the prieſts had to manage, was wholly and only matter of grace; and though it were a covenant of grace, yet it is oppoſed to that which Chriſt in his own perſon mediated; therefore the oppoſition which ſtands here, is not between the covenant of works, and of grace; but it is between the covenant of grace weak, imperfect, unprofitable, diſannulled; and another covenant of grace that is perfect, eſtabliſhed, and makes the comers thereunto perfect.

So that indeed, though Chriſt be the ſubject-matter of the covenant of grace, whether old or new, and though there be remiſſion of ſins in both; (for I call the prieſts covenant now the old, and that I will make good preſently,) yet, I ſay, there is ſuch a difference between theſe two, that they are two diſtinct covenants one from the other.

That it may appear to you, that they are both covenants

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covenants of grace, and yet two distinct ones also, consider briefly these particulars.

1. It is granted to all men, that in the covenant of works, there is no remission of sin, no notice of Christ; but the whole employment of the priests of the old law, was altogether about remission of sins, and the exhibiting Christ in their fashion unto the people. In *Numb.* xv. 28. (I will give you but one instance,) you shall plainly see that the administration of the priestly office had remission of sins as the main end of it. *If a soul sin through ignorance, he shall bring a she-goat unto the priest, and he shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly; and it shall be forgiven him:* see, the main end is administring forgiveness of sins.

And that Christ was the main subject of their ministry is plain, because the apostle saith in the verse before my text, that all that administration was but a shadow of him, and a figure for the present to represent him, as he expresses it in chap. ix. and the truth is, the usual gospel that all the *Jews* had, was in their sacrifices and priestly observations; it is true, the prophets propheſied of a glorious gospel, but mostly you shall find that the most excellent gospel they preached, was always preached with reference to the future. The prophet *Jeremiah* hath an excellent passage in chap. l. 20 *The iniquity of* Israel *shall be sought for, and there shall be none:* but mark it, it is in those days, and at that time, it shall be sought for, and not found; he doth not speak this of the present, but of future times; therefore St. *Peter* observes, that when

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when they propheſied concerning the fulneſs of grace, they did not propheſy unto themſelves but unto us, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. the main goſpel they had was to be fetched out of thoſe trivial obſervations, ceremonies, ſacrifices, and gifts which they were to attend upon, whence they were to fetch their pardon through Chriſt.

So that it is plain, the adminiſtration of their covenant was an adminiſtration of grace, abſolutely diſtinct from that of the covenant of works. That Chriſt's covenant was a covenant of grace, I will not ſtand to prove; I know no man queſtions it that profeſſes himſelf a Chriſtian; but now though theſe two, as it appears plainly, are covenants of grace; ſo it ſhall appear as fully to you that they are two diſtinct covenants of grace; they are not one and the ſame covenant diverſely adminiſtered, but they are two diſtinct covenants*.

To make it good, becauſe I know ſome may

* Notwithſtanding all the worthy Doctor has ſaid, theſe don't appear to be two covenants eſſentially diſtinct; ſince he himſelf owns, that Chriſt is the ſubject-matter of both, and remiſſion of ſins is in them both; and though called *firſt* and *ſecond*, and the latter coming in the place of the former, this may be ſaid of one form of adminiſtration of the covenant ſucceeding another. Mr. *Lancaſter*, *Vindication of the Goſpel*, p. 199, thinks the controverſy may be compromiſed by diſtinguiſhing the *old covenant* into the *promiſe veiled*, the ſame in ſubſtance with that in the new teſtament, and the *veil itſelf* done away; which is giving up the point, ſince that is no other than the ceremonial law, the outward form of adminiſtering the covenant of grace under the former diſpenſation, and was a ſhadow of good things to come by Chriſt, clearly revealed under the preſent adminiſtration: however, this is a matter of no very great importance; and the Doctor has excellently ſhewn the difference between theſe two, be they called what they will; and, indeed, properly ſpeaking, the covenant of grace, as made, was before them both, even from eternity.

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think much of this that I deliver, I ſhall deſire you to receive nothing, but as the plain ſcripture will make it evident unto you: for this purpoſe firſt conſult chap. viii. 7. There are, if I miſtake not, three arguments in thoſe few words, to prove that they are two divers covenants. *If the firſt had been faultleſs, then ſhould no place have been ſought for the ſecond;* where obſerve, that having ſpoken before in the text of a better covenant, whereof Chriſt is the miniſter and mediator; he ſaith in oppoſition to this, *If the firſt had been faultleſs.*

Again, here you ſee the apoſtle expreſly calls theſe the firſt and the ſecond; *If the firſt had been faultleſs, there ſhould have been no place for the ſecond.* Now that it ſhould be affirmed of one and the ſame covenant, that this is the firſt, and that this is the ſecond, and yet theſe two ſhould be both one, is ſtrange: *There are three that bear record in heaven, the father, the word, and the ſpirit:* it is true, the divine eſſence is one; but conſider as there are three perſons, they are not one; ſo if you will conſider any thing as they are two, they are not one: now theſe covenants are called firſt and ſecond, therefore they cannot be both one.

Again, the apoſtle ſpeaks of a ſecond coming in the place of the firſt; we cannot ſay of one and the ſelf-ſame covenant, that it comes in place of itſelf; when one thing comes in the place of another, theſe two muſt needs be diſtinct: can you ſay of the one and the ſame thing, that it is diſannulled, and that it is not? that it vaniſhes, and yet that it is come in the place of itſelf when it vaniſhes?

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vaniſhes? In chap. vii. 18. you ſhall find plainly that the apoſtle, ſpeaking of the covenant under the prieſthood, calls it *the commandment that went before;* and ſays, it was diſannulled in that it was weak and unprofitable. And in chap. x. 9. he tells us, that *he takes away* (ſpeaking of Chriſt) *the firſt, that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond;* ſo that here you may plainly ſee, that theſe two covenants, one is not only called firſt, and the other ſecond; but the one is ſo the firſt, and the other ſo the ſecond, that the firſt muſt be taken away, that the ſecond may come in place; and that the ſecond doth not come till the firſt be diſannulled: but all the queſtion will be, whether, when the apoſtle ſpeaks thus of firſt and ſecond, of old and new, of better and worſe, of diſannulling and coming in place; whether he means the covenant of grace, under which the *Jews* were, and that under which we are in Chriſt, or ſome other.

For clearing this, I beſeech you, conſider what he ſpeaks for the illuſtrating his own mind. In chap. viii. 8. having made a diſtinction of better and faulty, of firſt and ſecond, ſee how he proves what he ſpeaks, that they are diſtinct: *For finding fault with them, he ſaith, The days come when I will make a new covenant with the houſe of* Iſrael, *and with the houſe of* Judah, *not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of* Egypt, (and as *Jeremiah* adds; for he takes all this out of *Jer.* xxxi. 31.) *Although I was a huſband to them;* and in the cloſe of all, *Your ſins and iniquities will I remember*

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I remember no more. 1. You ſee the apoſtle from *Jeremiah*, brings a direct diſtinction of two covenants; *I will make a new covenant, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers.* Here are two covenants, a new one, and one made with their fathers. Some may think it was the covenant of works at the promulgation of the moral law; but mark well that expreſſion of *Jeremiah*, and you ſhall ſee it was the covenant of grace; *For*, (ſaith he) *not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, although I was an huſband unto them.* How can God be conſidered as a huſband to a people under the covenant of works, which was broken by man in innocency, and ſo became diſannulled? the covenant of works runs thus; *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law;* and, *in the day that thou ſinneſt thou ſhalt die the death.* Man had ſinned before God took him by the hand to lead him out of the land of *Egypt*, and ſin had ſeparated man from God; how then can he be called a huſband in the covenant of works? The covenant therefore was not a covenant of works, but ſuch a one as the Lord became a huſband in, and that muſt be a covenant of grace; and yet, ſaith he, *I will make a new covenant, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers*, &c. In the cloſe of this chapter, ſee how the apoſtle ſums up the matter; *In that he ſaith a new*, ſaith he, *the firſt is waxed old, and ſo is ready to vaniſh away;* here you ſee again, how he makes this diſtinction between the covenants, old and new; one being new,

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new, is fresh; the other being old, is ready to vanish away. Again consider, in chap. ix. he goes on, as with main strength, to make good the thing, that there are two distinct covenants; *The first covenant verily*, saith he, *had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.* What is this first covenant? The apostle reckons up all the implements of it; he speaks of their candlestick, table, and gifts, and so goes along; but mark in ver. 14. what opposition he makes; *Wherefore*, saith he, *Christ is a mediator of the new testament.* Wherefore, upon what terms is this? In that first covenant there was but blood of bulls and goats, which could never perfect the comers thereunto, as pertaining to the conscience; but when Christ comes with his own blood, *He obtained eternal redemption, and so purged the conscience from dead works:* so that by this you may perceive, he makes absolute distinction between the first, which did consist in those rites, and that whereof Christ is the mediator; in a word, in chap. x. he renews the distinction once more; the law consisted in burnt sacrifices, offerings, *&c.* which could never make the comers thereunto perfect, ver. 1. but there was a remembrance of sin once every year; therefore, saith the apostle (speaking of the Lord) *Sacrifices and offerings thou wouldest not; then, said I,* (that is Christ) *Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God. In that he saith, Lo, I come, he takes away the first, that he might establish the second.* If all this be not a sufficient evidence to clear this, that they are distinct covenants; and so distinct, that though both

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both be covenants of grace, yet the one must be disannulled before the other can be established; I know nothing that can be proved by scripture.

But to come to the main thing; there being two distinct covenants, let us see wherein that which Christ administered, is better than that the priests did; and this will be of very great concern to the settling of spirits: the differences are marvellous; the apostle expresses them in such language, that, I dare be bold to say, if any man should utter it, and not have his warrant from him, he would go nigh to be censured. That first covenant, though it was a covenant of grace, yet he spares not to say, that it was not faultless; that is, it was not without fault: he goes further, he saith it was unprofitable, yea, weak; nay, which is marvellous to consider, he calls the administration of that covenant, *beggarly rudiments*; whereas, on the other side, in the covenant Christ manages, he says, *By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, chap. x. 14. The difference then stands in these two things.

The covenant which the priests administered, was a very imperfect one; that Christ manages, is most absolute, complete, and perfect. There was a necessity of adding many things unto their covenant; but that which Christ managed, is so complete, that nothing in the world can be added to it: if any will stumble at the word faulty, you must understand, beloved, that there is a twofold faultiness in things; it may be either sinful, or imperfect; the covenant was not sinfully faulty, for

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for it was of God's own making that cannot ſin; but you will ſay, being ſo, it cannot be imperfect.

You muſt diſtinguiſh perfection, which is twofold; a thing may be ſaid to be perfect, in reſpect of the end for which it was ordained, or to compaſs higher ends than it was ordained to: as for that firſt covenant of grace, it was not imperfect for that end that God appointed; for it did all that he purpoſed ſhould be done by it; but it was imperfect to do ſo much as Chriſt himſelf did. This is the main thing I would proſecute, to let you ſee wherein the covenant that Chriſt managed excels the covenant which the prieſts managed: there are three things principally wherein they differ. I will paſs by many ordinary differences.

1. Chriſt's covenant is better, in reſpect of the remiſſion of ſins.

2. In reſpect of peace of conſcience.

3. In reſpect of freedom from puniſhment and wrath as the deſert of ſin.

1. I have ſhewed before, that ſome remiſſion of ſins was under the *Jews* covenant of grace; I ſhall now endeavour to let you ſee wherein that was imperfect, in compariſon of what Chriſt hath now brought by his own offering himſelf once for all. It may be, this may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange, that I ſhould affirm, that their remiſſion of ſins was imperfect; but, beloved, the apoſtle ſpeaks fully to the point, and ſaith expreſsly, that there was *remembrance of ſins again every year*, chap. x. But, to handle things diſtinctly and particularly.

1. Their

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1. Their remiſſion of ſins was imperfect, in compariſon of what Chriſt by his own perſon hath wrought; they had not in their covenant a plenary remiſſion of all ſorts of ſins; they could not tell whither to go to find pardon for ſome *. This is plain in *Numb.* xv. 28,--30. where, *Moſes* ſpeaking of one ſinning by ignorance, a ſhe-goat being brought, there might be an atonement made for him, and the ſin might be forgiven: but mark what follows, *The ſoul that ſins preſumptuouſly ſhall die*; here is a ſacrifice for ſins of ignorance, but *the ſoul that ſins preſumptuouſly ſhall die*, no ſacrifice for that. So again, *Gen.* xvii. 14. you ſhall find, that there was no ſacrifice to be had for uncircumciſion; *The man-child, that ſhall not be circumciſed, ſhall be cut off*; no other remedy, no appeal to other ſacrifices; here was no ſparing him by any means; no ſacrifice to expiate his tranſgreſſion. In *Exod.* xxxi. 14. alſo you ſhall ſee that there was no pardon to be met with for the prophanation of the ſabbath, but that ſoul muſt be cut off; and, ſo, whoſoever eat of the ſacrifice, and had uncleanneſs upon him, muſt be cut off, *Lev.* vii. 20. I might inſtance in many other particulars; but certainly there was variety of ſins for which no ſacrifice could be admitted, and conſequently no pardon obtained, nor ſued out for

* Not but the ſaints under the old teſtament had full forgiveneſs by looking to the blood and ſacrifice of Chriſt, which cleanſed from all ſin then, as now, but not by legal ſacrifices, or in the *Moſaic* adminiſtration.

them.

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them *: for pardon of ſin was ſued out upon thoſe ſacrifices God required: but now mark the difference; herein is the covenant, whereof Chriſt was the mediator, infinitely better than that other, in the large extent of pardon which it brought along with it. For this purpoſe, look into 1 *Joh.* i. 7. where he ſaith, *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt, his Son, cleanſeth us from all ſin.* Obſerve it, I pray you, *from all ſin;* ſee the extent of it; you cannot name the ſin which a perſon would be willing to caſt off, and have a pardon for, but the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from it. If the *Jews* would have given all their eſtates, that they might have been admitted to bring ſacrifice for ſuch and ſuch a ſin, it could not be; *But the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.*

But you will ſay, in chap. x. 26. the apoſtle ſeems to intimate, as if there were ſome ſins for which we can have no remiſſion; his words are theſe; *If we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin.* Here, ſome may ſay, it ſeems that if a perſon ſhall happen to ſin wilfully, after he hath received the knowledge of the truth, there is no ſacrifice for ſin.

I beſeech you, give me leave to open to you the meaning of the apoſtle, and his plain drift. I find thouſands of perſons are mightily miſtaken

* Pardon of ſin might be ſued out by faith then, upon the blood and ſacrifice of Chriſt; but not upon legal ſacrifices, which for ſome ſins were not admitted, and yet were pardoned through Chriſt, as *David's*, and others.

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in it, and ſo the text comes to be a very fearful burthen upon their ſpirits; but that you may underſtand the ſcope of it aright, know, that there he is cloſing all the former diſcourſe, which ſtands mainly in theſe two things; that there is now one perfect ſacrifice once offered by Chriſt himſelf, that perfectly doth all things to be done, and, therefore, muſt be offered no more; and that all the ſacrifices that were to be offered, are now vaniſhed; and, in the interim, he comes to this concluſion: now that you have received the knowledge of this truth, that all ſacrifices muſt now ceaſe, if you ſin wilfully, that is, if you will reject this truth I have delivered unto you; if you think that this one ſacrifice is not enough to ſerve your turn, but you will look to others, there remains no more ſacrifice for your ſin: as if he ſhould ſay, You will but deceive yourſelves to look in any other way for pardon; you may think ſuch and ſuch ſervices, confeſſions, prayers, faſtings, will do ſomething towards the remiſſion of ſins; but deceive not yourſelves in this, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin. Chriſt was but once offered; if you will not conclude to adhere to that one ſacrifice once offered; nor have that to bring perfect remiſſion of ſins, you will certainly miſcarry; there will be no other remedy, but indignation and wrath will fall upon you; every thing elſe will fail; that is the firſt. I beſeech you have patience, and let me but open myſelf, leſt I leave both myſelf and the truth to ſcandal.

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2. The covenant he brings, is more perfect, in that though there was remiſſion of ſins in it, and ſo it differs from the covenant of works; yet mark it, and you ſhall find, that their covenant, though it was a covenant of grace, did not adminiſter grace, but upon antecedent conditions to be performed, before there could be any participation of the grace of it *; I ſay, there muſt be many things done firſt, before a pardon could be heard of; whereas, under the covenant of grace, which Chriſt brings, there is no antecedent condition at all; but the whole grace is communicated before ever the perſon doth any thing towards it. In that covenant they muſt be at the coſt of ſacrifices, muſt bring them to the tabernacle, muſt confeſs their ſins to the prieſt; and, (for ought I know) in caſes of extremity, muſt faſt too, before they could obtain pardon of ſin, and removal of judgment; but the covenant that Chriſt brings into the world himſelf, is ſuch, that before ever the perſon could be able to do any one thing in the world that is good, the whole grace of it is made his, and we need not be at the coſt of a ſacrifice, Chriſt is at that himſelf; we need not bring a Chriſt, he brings himſelf; we need not offer him, he offers himſelf; nay, our confeſſion of ſin is not antecedent to

* That is, in the *Moſaic* way, or according to the adminiſtration of the covenant of grace in that way; otherwiſe ſaints then, as now, had the pardon of their ſins freely, looking to the grace of God and blood of Chriſt, and were juſtified as freely, and ſaved by the free grace of God, even as we are.

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the forgiveneſs of it; remiſſion doth not depend upon that, but only upon the grace of God; *I am found of them that ſought me not; before they call, I will anſwer.*

Do but mark, beloved, how the terms of the covenant of grace by Chriſt run; *Even while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the blood of Chriſt;* there could be no good thing done before our reconciliation, when we were conſidered ſimply and only as enemies: and ſo in *Ezek.* xvi. 6, 8. *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, thy time was the time of love; I ſware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine:* when? *When thou waſt in thy blood;* there is no antecedent doing, before the participation of the covenant; nay, the covenant is ſworn, even when in blood. The apoſtle, in *Rom.* iv. 5. tells us, *That to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.* Chriſt conſiders men under no other notion but ungodly, when he confers the grace of his covenant upon them: you ſhall never hear, in all the old covenant, pardon beſtowed, before works of bringing, and offering ſacrifice; but under the covenant of grace, there is no reſpect of good works to the participation of it; even true faith itſelf is no condition of this covenant *, neither is it required as an antecedent to it, or to forgiveneſs. True faith, indeed, is the evidence of things not ſeen; we

* See the note on page 142.

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know not that ſin is pardoned, 'till we believe, becauſe it is hid in the breaſt of God, or rather veiled in the goſpel, under general terms, until Chriſt gives faith unto his people; whereby, they ſee their ſins, as well as other believers, are forgiven; but ſimply to the conveyance of the pardon itſelf, there is nothing in the world but grace. You know, beloved, a prince ſometimes looks upon a condemned perſon in pity, and conſidering him as a dying man, out of grace gives him his pardon; and thus did the Lord by Chriſt in a new covenant; he looks upon ſuch and ſuch, as he ſees good, going to execution, and merely out of pity caſt upon them in this deplorable condition, ſends Chriſt with pardon to them; not calling upon them to change their perſons, to come thus and thus handſome, and then he will ſay ſomething unto them; but as they are condemned malefactors, and come to execution, ſo he gives his pardon.

3. Though there was pardon under the old covenant, yet know, that what they had, was but *gradatim*, and ſucceſſively, as they offered ſacrifice; it was not continued, and ſucceſſive, but it had interims and ſtops; in plain language, the covenant of the *Jews* reached out pardon of ſin only ſo far forth, as it was committed before ſuch and ſuch a ſacrifice was offered; if a man had ſinned ignorantly, 'till he had brought a ſacrifice, his ſin lay upon him; when he did bring it, it took away but that ſin; it did not, neither could it, extend to future ſins. Here preſently is a ſucceſſion

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ceſſion of ſin, and this muſt lie, 'till there come a ſecond ſacrifice to take away that; and when that is gone, a third ſin lies again upon the heart; and that is not gone, 'till there comes a new ſacrifice for it: and the reaſon the apoſtle ſaith, *There is a remembrance again of ſin;* becauſe, *The comers thereto could not be perfect;* that is, they indeed had pardon by drops, now for one ſin, then for another; it may be a week, a month's diſtance between, before they could have it; and ſtill they had it, as their ſacrifice was offered: mark the inconvenience of this; ſo long as any ſin lay upon their ſpirits, theſe were under the burthen of their own tranſgreſſions; this is the reaſon you have often among the *Jews* ſo many complaints; *My ſins are like a ſore burden, too heavy for me to bear;* and of the exceeding bitterneſs of their ſpirits. No marvel, beloved, they were to bear their own ſins; 'till the ſacrifice came there was no diſcharge; ſo that in the interim ſin lay upon their conſciences: but mark how the covenant that Chriſt brought was better than that they had; *By one ſacrifice once offered, hath he perfected for ever them that are ſanctified:* as much as to ſay, thoſe that are under this, are not put to theſe ſtops and interims for pardon, and are not to wait the time of the ſacrifice, that ſo they may receive it from ſuch a ſacrifice; nor after they have ſome teſtimony of it, do they now lie under the weight of a ſin new committed; but Chriſt did ſo perfectly go through the work of redemption, and taking away ſin, that by one ſacrifice

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crifice he took it away at once for ever *. Here, beloved, lies one of the chiefeſt comforts, of the whole goſpel of Chriſt, to ſee that in him, ſins paſt, preſent, and to come, are all at once wrapt up in this one ſacrifice of his; there is an expiation before-hand for ſin that ſhall be committed; there is not an expectation of a future expiation; a ſacrifice is already offered of value ſufficient to take away the ſins that afterward are committed; the value of this ſacrifice went both upward and downward; upward to *Adam* for the full pardon of all the ſins of the elect, until Chriſt came; and it goes downward ſince he came, for the pardon of all the ſins of every elect perſon until the end of the world; ſo that in conſideration of ſin committed ſince he offered himſelf, there is not ſome new thing to be done; but herein ſtands the perfection of what Chriſt did, it ſerves fully and completely for every purpoſe that could poſſibly happen afterwards.

There is but one particular more, and that is this, they had pardon (it is true) but as I may ſo ſay, that covenant though it did ſweep, yet it left a great deal of duſt behind; I mean this, though their daily and occaſional ſacrifices did take away ſin, yet they did not take it away clean, but left ſome ſcattering of it behind: and this is plain by this, the apoſtle ſaith, there were in theſe ſacrifices, a remembrance of ſin again every year; that is, there muſt be an annual ſacrifice to ſweep away

[* Dan. ix. 24.]

thoſe

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thoſe relics of the duſt of ſin, which their daily ſacrifice did leave behind; ſo that they were glad of the coming of the yearly ſacrifice to take away ſin, to make a clean riddance after theſe ſacrifices, which could not do it; when theſe were offered, though there was ſomething of remiſſion of ſins, yet certainly there remained ſomething of ſin behind, and that till a year came about, or elſe that ſacrifice once a year was in vain. Why could not their daily ſacrifices do it? God would not, that they ſhould make a clear riddance: and even that yearly ſacrifice did not do it; for there muſt come another yearly ſacrifice after that, and another after that; but now there remains no ſacrifice for ſin; no yearly, no daily, no occaſional ſacrifices for the taking away of ſin.

But, you will ſay, will you take away all manner of duties and ſervices under the goſpel? I anſwer, I take not away the duty, no, by no means, but the end; there is no duty we perform, that is now a ſacrifice to take away ſin; nothing but the blood of Chriſt only, takes away ſin; as for the ſervices of Chriſtians, there are many other purpoſes for which they are required; as to expreſs obedience to the will of God, the ſerving our generation, the ſetting forth the praiſe of the glory of God's free grace; theſe are the ends of our ſervices; but to expect, by any ſervice we do, to obtain pardon of ſin, is abſolutely *Jewiſh*, a new ſacrifice upon commiſſion of new ſins; and directly overthrows all the fulneſs and ſufficiency of that one ſacrifice, offered by Chriſt himſelf.

2. The

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2. The difference between these two covenants, stands in quieting the conscience; this follows necessarily upon the former. As there remains something of sin in that covenant of the *Jews*, so there must remain something of terror and trouble upon their conscience; a tender and well enlightened conscience, always sees and feels sin where it is; if there be any, a tender conscience feels it, and the gripe and gird of it; now, in that, there were sometimes some sins upon their persons no marvel that there were pain in their consciences for sin, for the apostle saith expressly, *That those gifts and sacrifices could not take away sin, as pertaining to the conscience*; that is, they could not so take it away, that the conscience should be eased; for still there would be new sins committed that would disquiet it; hence it is that they cry, out of the bitterness of their spirits, that sin did lie upon them. But, beloved, that which Christ brought is better than this, in that *the blood of Christ purges the conscience from dead works*; for which cause he is called, *The mediator of a new testament*; because his blood obtained a redemption, purged the conscience, not only from the foul acting of things, but from those sins, which, while they remain, lie as a weight to torment the spirit. Christ takes away all the sins of his people; either you must say, Christ's sacrifice doth not take away all, or that there is not a sin left, after Christ hath cleansed the conscience of a believer. In a word, to close up all.

3. The

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3. The covenant that Chriſt brought was better, in regard of wrath and judgment for ſin. Juſtice you know follows ſin at the heels; where it finds ſin, there it executes; juſtice finding ſin now and then upon the *Jews*, under that covenant, as it met with them ſo gave them a laſh for them; hence you have thoſe many complaints of God's juſtice plaguing them always: it was juſtice, becauſe there was ſin, which was their own, and was charged upon themſelves, 'till the ſacrifice came, and therefore their judgment was juſt; but Chriſt is the mediator of a better covenant, in that as he hath taken away all ſin, ſo he hath taken away all the deſert of it: though it be true under the goſpel, the Lord chaſtiſes his people as a father with his rod; yet he never pours out indignation and wrath as their deſert; he never looks to ſatisfy himſelf with any puniſhment of any member of Chriſt; for he beheld the travail of Chriſt, and was ſatisfied with that, *Iſa.* liii. and when God is once ſatisfied, he will never demand another ſatisfaction: if Chriſt hath worn out the rod of wrath to the ſtumps, and caſt it into the fire, certainly there is no more of it to be remembered: the apoſtle is full to this, *Gal.* iii. 24. ſpeaking of the *Jews*, he ſaith that they were under a ſchoolmaſter, *i. e.* a ſcourge, until Chriſt; for ſo are the words in the original; *The law*, ſaith he, *was a ſchool-maſter until Chriſt; but when faith was come, we are no longer under a ſchoolmaſter.* They indeed were fit to be ſcourged, becauſe they were in a ſtate ſubject to ſin, guilt, and faults, until Chriſt came; but

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but when faith, that is, Chriſt himſelf was come, were no longer under a ſchool-maſter; therefore in chap. iv. 1. the apoſtle calls them heirs indeed, becauſe at length they did attain ſalvation; but in reſpect of the weight and burthen of the rod upon them, he ſaith, that for the preſent they differed nothing from ſervants; *The heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a ſervant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the appointed time of the father;* that is, 'till Chriſt came; but when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son: I know it may be well interpreted of delivering perſons in general, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, from under the ſlavery of ſin; but doubtleſs the apoſtle hath an eye to this; namely, in reſpect of the imperfection of taking ſin from them, they did bear indignation and wrath for ſo much ſin as was upon them; whereas Chriſt takes away all wrath and indignation from us, as it is the deſert of ſin.

Uſe 1. In all this you may ſee the glorious liberty *wherewith Chriſt hath made you free*, wherein ſtand faſt, *and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

2. By keeping theſe truths, you ſhall be able to anſwer ſatisfactorily to the knotticſt objections that are or can be made againſt the free grace of God in Chriſt, eſpecially from examples and actions under the old covenant.

SERMON

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SERMON XVII.

Chriſt the great Paymaſter of all the Debts of his People.

ISAIAH liii. 6. latter part.

And the Lord hath laid [or, made to meet] *on him the iniquity of us all.*

OF all the choſen veſſels to bear the name of Chriſt prophetically, before the children of *Iſrael*, there is none ſo like the apoſtles as this our prophet, in reſpect of the ſolemnity of his call; as appears by comparing both together; both he and they were called by viſible fire ſettling on them, *Iſa.* vi. 6, 7. *Acts* ii. 3, 4. Doubtleſs, this ſingular likeneſs of their calls, portended (as, indeed, in the event it proved) a ſingular likeneſs between their miniſtries, as if he had been ſingled out to be the fore-runner of them. Sure, if prediction be enough to denominate him a prophet, the glorious and precious goſpel he preached, ſo far beyond the accuſtomed ſtream of his times, may well admit him into the fellowſhip of the evangeliſts;

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evangeliſts; ſcarce coming ſhort of any of them, in holding forth the *bright morning-ſtar*, or *ſun of righteouſneſs, with healing in his wings*: it is true, the other prophets now and then met with Chriſt in their perambulations; but, as they ſaw him at remote diſtance, ſo they could take but, as it were, a ſhadow of him, and accordingly repreſent him to the people; but this prophet ſeems to prepoſſeſs the beloved diſciple's place, even the boſom of Chriſt: you may, with one eye, eaſily ſee, by comparing him with the reſt, the vaſt difference. But to leave compariſons, becauſe ſome think them odious; how admirably he preacheth the free and full grace of God to ſelf-willed ſinners, let this chapter ſerve for a ſample; which both Chriſt himſelf, and his apoſtles, took ſo much notice of, that, of all the prophetic paſſages, there is none ſo frequently quoted by them, as theſe here mentioned, which the quotations in the margin point out unto you, as you may there ſee. In the prophet's entrance upon his ſweet diſcourſe of the unſearchable treaſures of God's love in Chriſt to his people, whiſpered, as it were, a ſecret in his ear, he ſeems to be at a ſtand; as if he could hardly tell whether to bring it to light, or hold his tongue, out of a probable ſuſpicion he had grounded on former experience, that this kind of doctrine would be rejected; *Who hath believed our report?* &c. ver. 1. Now that this may not ſeem to be a calumny, but on good ground, in ver. 2. he gives an account of the reaſons moving him to it, beſides what occaſioned it from former experience.

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rience. He knew that the people expected great matters from Christ when he came; (as well they might) and, therefore, that his first appearance should promise much; and that if it should be in a mean low way, which would carry no likelihood of compassing great matters, he should not be believed: now it was revealed unto him, that Christ must *grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.* If therefore men judged according to outward appearance, (as probably they will) it might easily be judged that his labour would be vain, and that he should spend his strength for nought. Who expects a fair and plentiful crop in a barren heath or wilderness? What else but inconsiderable shrubs? How can men hope better of him, who must *grow up as a root out of a dry ground?* So long as common principles of reason rule, and ingross conclusions, Christ appearing, as is fore-prophesied, will not be taken for the man he is, but rather be laughed to scorn: as indeed, when he did so appear, he was, by not only the vulgar, but also by the great doctors the Pharisees: afterwards the prophet more plainly expounds what he means by growing up as a root out of a dry ground; *He hath no form nor comeliness;* that is, his face will promise little or nothing, so that for lack of outward beauty, no desirableness will appear in him; hereupon, in ver. 3. he changeth his suspicion into a peremptory assertion, and concludes, *He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows,* &c.

Yet,

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Yet, for all this, our prophet was in travail, and could not be at ease till he had brought forth the man-child, who was to save his people from their sins; it seems he was in *Elihu*'s temper, *Job* xxxii. 17, 18, 19. full of matter, and the Spirit within him constraining him, his belly was as wine which hath no vent; this ravishing news from heaven must out, or he must burst; speak he will, that he may be refreshed; though the most should put it from them, yet, some few, he hoped, would gather crumbs of comfort from it, nay, be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of it; the dawning of the light whereof breaks forth in ver. 4. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted:* where he clears up a secret objection, which, unto common principles, ariseth out of the condition he was found in, *viz.* How can he be the Saviour of others that cannot save himself? If God plunge him in wrath, sure he can have but little power to prevail for the deliverance of others. The answer is touched in ver. 4. and more fully amplified and cleared up in ver. 5. The sorrows and griefs he sustained were not his own, but ours: it is true, he was wounded, bruised, and chastised, but not for any faults of his own, or out of any distaste God took against his person, who was his beloved Son; but *he was wounded for our transgressions*, &c. In ver. 6. the prophet describes what those were, for which he was wounded; *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way:* now, in my

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my text, he clears up the juſtice of God in wounding him *for our tranſgreſſions*; for it might be objected, that there can be no equity to puniſh an innocent for a delinquent: but that ſhews that though the delinquency be not his own act, yet the Lord laid it on him. As to the equity of laying it on him, we ſhall have a fair opportunity to clear it up in handling of the text; but, before I come to it, let us conſider what place theſe words muſt have, in order of nature, in this diſcourſe of the prophet: note, that though according to the order of the words, Chriſt is firſt ſaid to bear our ſorrows, then to be wounded, and then we have peace through his chaſtiſements, before our iniquities are laid on him; yet it is not rare to ſee the precious truths of God out of order in this regard: *Who hath ſaved us, and called us with an holy calling*, ſaith *Paul*, (I bring this but as one inſtance). Salvation, as all know, in order of nature, and time alſo, follows our holy calling, yet in the words it hath precedency. It is ſo in this diſcourſe; the true method of the goſpel ſuppoſeth the creature's ſinfulneſs, as it is firſt laid down in this verſe, which gives the occaſion of Chriſt's being a Saviour; and, whereas wounds and ſtripes are the juſt wages of ſin, this ſinfulneſs of the creature muſt ſome way be on Chriſt, or elſe he might not in juſtice be wounded; punitive juſtice muſt firſt find a crime upon a man, before it can ſmite him; as for Chriſt, he himſelf never committed any fault, ver. 9. *He did no violence, neither was any*

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any deceit in his mouth, as the Lord himſelf ſays; therefore, it follows, that the ſins of others muſt be charged to his account, and he muſt be reſponſible for them, before he can juſtly be wounded; hence, in my text, *The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Now (as in ſuretyſhip) our debt becoming his, the execution goes juſtly out againſt him, and ſo God can give a juſt account of wounding him; and he being thus wounded, that is, bearing the full indignation and wrath our ſins deſerve, and ſo ending all the quarrel God had againſt us; it follows, that theſe wounds of his become the *chaſtiſement of our peace*; God having hereby nothing to ſay againſt us; and ſeeing all is well between him and us, he doth not only take away the anguiſh, but alſo proceeds to make a perfect cure; *By his ſtripes we are healed.* And ſo I come to the words themſelves, which are as the dawning of the day after a ſad dark night; holding forth the firſt glimmerings of comfort to men, that have loſt themſelves in the dark. I confeſs it is ſupernatural for a man to ſee the exceeding horridneſs of ſin, he being naturally blind; but yet many attain this, who come ſhort of reaching the gracious mind of the Lord in acquitting men from their ſins (witneſs *Cain* and *Judas*) which is no where more fully revealed than in this text.

The truth is, however a careleſs eye may mind but little extraordinary, or admirable in the words; yet I dare be bold to ſay, they contain well nigh the deepeſt myſteries of God, manifeſted in the fleſh;

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fleſh; even thoſe things whereof our Saviour ſpeaks, when he gave thanks to the father, for *hiding them from the wiſe and prudent, and revealing them to babes.*

I am perſuaded, that not any who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, but will with both hands ſubſcribe to the whole text in general, without any contradiction. Oh, that the heart were ſtedfaſt in the ſeveral particulars! There is not a word in it, but hath its ſpecial weight: Satan knows full well that each is a mortal dart to pierce the very heart of his deſtructive principles; and therefore is very buſy with wiles to ſophiſticate the precious truths held forth herein, and bitter malice to poiſon this fountain: as by his inſtruments he would cozen the world with droſs for gold, ſo would he, if it were poſſible, deceive the very elect, in making them believe their gold is but droſs; or at leaſt play the thief, and foiſt droſs into their hands inſtead of this gold.

But becauſe it is gold tried in the fire, as near as may be, we will not loſe a duſt of it; and for the better huſbanding hereof, let us ſift theſe particulars in the words; 1. What this is which the Holy Ghoſt tells us is laid on Chriſt, *The iniquity of us all:* 2. How this is diſpoſed of, *The Lord hath laid it on him:* 3. At whoſe diſpoſal it is, *The Lord:* 4. On whom he laid it, *Him:* 5. Whoſe iniquities the Lord laid on him, *The iniquity of us all:* 6. When he laid it on him, the time is paſt, *He hath laid it on him.* All which

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particulars offer to our conſideration ſo many ſeveral moſt comfortable propoſitions: as,

I. God not only inflicted the deſert of ſin on Chriſt, in wounding him for it, but alſo he laid even iniquity itſelf on him, I mean the iniquity of his elect *.

II. God doth not connive at the iniquity of his people, as if, indeed, he knew well enough it lay on them, but yet he would overlook it, and be content to ſuppoſe it on Chriſt, whilſt it remains indeed on them; but, in expreſs terms, the Lord hath laid them on Chriſt.

III. This laying of iniquity on Chriſt, is the ſole act of the Lord himſelf; none, nor any thing elſe can do it but he; Chriſt himſelf laid not the ſins of his people on himſelf, but the Lord laid them on him. Chriſt is but the mediator between God and them in this buſineſs; contentedly indeed, ſtooping to the burthen, when the Lord agreed, and would have it ſo; much leſs doth any act of man, whether it be repentance, or turning from his evil ways, or amendment of life, or his faith, in the pureſt act of it, lay them on him; or hath the leaſt hand therein.

IV. The iniquity of God's people is no otherwiſe diſpoſed of by way of transfer from them, but only on Chriſt; none can bear or carry away iniquity from them, but he alone.

* He (Chriſt) was willing to become our ſurety, and to anſwer for our ſins, and to have them imputed to him, ſo as to be obliged to bear the puniſhment of them, even the wrath and curſe, which, if he had not endured them, would have ſunk every one of us into the pit of hell.——*Romaine on the Law and Goſpel*, page 170, laſt edition.

V. That

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V. That which was laid on Chriſt, was the iniquity of us all; even of us, who like ſheep have gone aſtray, and turned every one to our own way; that is, the Lord had no other conſideration in his thoughts at all, but our going aſtray, and turning to our own way, when he laid our iniquity on Chriſt: he did not obſerve any difference, as if one man were more lovely, or likely to be more ſerviceable, or were more pliable to his bent than others, which might win his love and pity; but looked only on their pollution in blood, rebellion, and enmity, taking the riſe of this grace of his only from within himſelf, even his own compaſſion.

VI. The Lord is not now to do this, nor is it reſerved till hereafter; but he hath laid them on Chriſt already; the act is paſt long before. And from hence ye may perceive, that there is not now a new thing to be done by the Lord in the tranſferring the ſins of believers to Chriſt; as if when they begin to be called out of darkneſs into marvellous light, juſt then God begins to transfer ſin from them, and lay it upon Chriſt; ſo that the act of God's laying ſin upon him, is not a continued act, but what he hath done long before. In which point, it will be conſiderable to find out the time when the Lord laid the iniquity of his people upon Chriſt: and it will be further worth conſideration, ſeeing the Lord *hath laid them*, what is become of them? where do they remain? As for the perſon whoſe ſins are transferred, he is acquitted and diſcharged. And likewiſe Chriſt

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is acquitted of them too: *Hath laid*, imports them both. If he hath taken them off from him, that was the committer of them, and laid them upon Christ, they are gone from him too: if they were not gone from him too, the words would have been, the Lord *lays*, in the *present tense*; but they are in the *preterperfect tense*, *hath laid*. And this will be very clear, if you consider, *Heb.* ix. 26. *He hath borne the sins of many, and to them that look for him, he shall appear the second time without sin.* Mark it well, there was a time that Christ did not appear without sin; for he bore the sins of many; but there is a second time when he shall appear, and then he shall be without sin; so that believers have no sins upon them *, and Christ hath none neither.

Every of these particulars will require time to discuss them fully; yet there is not any one of them, but will give sweet consolation to the most drooping spirit under heaven: we will take them into consideration, and begin with the first of them.

I. It is iniquity itself, even the sins themselves of those whom God intends shall reap benefit by Christ, that are laid on him. Satan hath raised a foul mist to darken the glorious light of this admirable truth. At first looking on it, you may think there is nothing in it more than in other ordinary truths; but you shall find in the close, that all the comfort you can take, concerning your freedom from sin, will hang upon this point,

* Cant. iv. 7.

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that it is iniquity itſelf that is laid upon Chriſt. But, many are ready to think, that the guilt (ſuch as they call ſo) and the puniſhment of ſin lay upon Chriſt indeed; but ſimply the very fault that men commit, that is, that the tranſgreſſion itſelf, is become the tranſgreſſion of Chriſt, is ſomewhat harſh *: but when the text ſaith, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;* the meaning is, that Chriſt himſelf becomes the tranſgreſſor in the room and ſtead of the perſon that had tranſgreſſed; ſo that in reſpect of the reality of being a tranſgreſſor, Chriſt is as really the tranſgreſſor †, as the man that did commit it was, before he took it upon him. Beloved, miſtake me not, I ſay, not that ever Chriſt was, or ever could be the

* But it ſhould not ſeem harſh, ſince tranſgreſſions only become Chriſt's by imputation, or by being in the ſinner's ſtead, as immediately explained; nor that not the guilt and puniſhment of ſin only are laid on Chriſt, but the fault itſelf, ſince that is not to be ſeparated from guilt; and ſince the ſcripture is ſo expreſs, that ſin or iniquity itſelf is laid on Chriſt: hence the learned *Witſius* obſerves, "I know not why ſome ſhould chooſe to ſay, the guilt or puniſhment of our ſins are transferred to Chriſt, rather than ſins themſelves as to the guilt; ſince this latter is ſaid by ſcripture itſelf, whoſe moſt pure, moſt wiſe, and very emphatic ſpeeches, to deſire to ſoften, by I know not what milder ones of ours, ſhews a mind nice and ſqueamiſh, and not ſetting that juſt value on the ſacred writings due unto them."—*Irenic. Animadv.* c. i. ſ. 15.

† Not the real actor and committer of the tranſgreſſion, as is afterwards explained, but as there was a real imputation of it to him, being the ſurety of his people who had tranſgreſſed; and is the true and only ſenſe in which the Dr. is to be underſtood; for, as the excellent *Witſius*, juſt before quoted, ſays, "Not ſo God imputes our ſins to Chriſt, as to judge that he committed the ſins we have committed; as to be drunk with *Noah*, to commit inceſt with *Lot*, or adultery with *David;* ſuch a thought, ſo foreign from all reaſon, could never enter into any man in his ſenſes, much leſs a Chriſtian, and one that fears God." *Ibid.* ſ. 11.

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actor, or committer of tranſgreſſion, for he never committed any; but the Lord laid iniquity upon him; and this act of God's laying it upon him, makes him as really a tranſgreſſor, as if he himſelf had actually committed it: and this I ſhall endeavour to clear by manifeſt ſcripture, that ſimply, without any equivocation, not in any figure, but plainly ſin itſelf was laid upon Chriſt; I ſhall then clear ſome objections, and ſhew the neceſſity of the thing.

Look but into *Iſa.* liii. 11, 12. there you ſhall find three words all expreſſing this one thing, that it is ſin itſelf, and deviations, that are laid on Chriſt: *He ſhall bear their iniquities,* ver. 11. *He was numbered among the tranſgreſſors, and he bare the ſins of many:* mark it well, I pray.

Some have been ready to conceive, that the word iniquity in the text is ſpoken figuratively; iniquity, that is, the puniſhment of it, was laid on him; but ſee how careful the Spirit of God is, to take away all ſuſpicion of a figure in the text; there are iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin, three words, and all ſpoken to the ſame purpoſe, to confirm it; and it is ſtrange, that all theſe three ſhould ſtill be underſtood of puniſhment, and not ſimply of ſin itſelf without any figure; but, from hence it is clear, that the iniquity itſelf, of the perſons for whom Chriſt ſuffered, is removed from a believer, and transferred upon him.

All the difficulty lies in that expreſſion, *He was numbered among the tranſgreſſors.* Some will be ready to ſay, he was ſo indeed, but by whom was he

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he numbered? The Scribes and Phariſees called him a blaſphemer, and a ſeducer; and they ſaid, he had a devil, and was a glutton and wine-bibber; and according to the charge, they crucified him with tranſgreſſors, and ſo he was numbered amongſt them; but God did not account him ſo; and though they did, it doth not therefore follow that he was ſo.

I anſwer, Under favour, beloved, let me tell you, that in this place Chriſt being numbered amongſt tranſgreſſors, was ſpoken in reſpect of God's own accounting him among the number of tranſgreſſors; for he himſelf made him one at that time. Bear with the expreſſion; for the apoſtle hath one higher than this, though it may ſeem harſh to you. Look into 2 *Corinth.* v. 21. There you ſhall ſee that God made him more than a tranſgreſſor; *He was made ſin for us;* there is a great deal of difference between being made ſin, and being made a ſinner, with any that know how the expreſſion in the abſtract goes beyond that in the concrete: I know the word may be ſpoken hyperbolically; not that Chriſt ſimply could be made ſin, or his eſſence be turned into ſin; but the apoſtle's meaning was, that no tranſgreſſor in the world was ſuch a one as Chriſt was *. But ſtill he was a tranſgreſſor, as our tranſgreſſions

* This is true of Chriſt, not as the actor of tranſgreſſion, as the Dr. immediately obſerves, but as he was made ſo by imputation, in which reſpect he was the greateſt tranſgreſſor in the world; for let any man be ever ſo great a one, he has only his own ſins on him: but Chriſt, though he had none of his own, yet

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tranſgreſſions were laid upon him, not that he was the actor of any; and how could the Lord himſelf by his own act lay our tranſgreſſions upon him, and make him a tranſgreſſor; nay, make him ſin, and yet not number him among ſuch as were tranſgreſſors *?

yet being the ſurety of his people, and ſtanding in their place, had all their ſins upon him, which he calls his own, and were innumerable, *Pſ.* xl. 12. and ſo was, by imputation, what no ſinner ever was, or could be; and this is ſaying no more than what divines, ancient and modern, have not ſcrupled to affirm. *Chryſoſtom* on 2 *Cor.* v. 21. ſays, God made him αμαρτωλον, a *ſinner*, yea more than that, *ſin itſelf*. *Œcumenius* on *Heb.* ix. p. 849. ſays, he was ως σφοδρα αμαρτωλος. *an exceeding great ſinner*; ſince he took on him the ſins of the whole world, and made them his own. *Calvin* and *Beza*, on 2 *Cor.* v. 21. ſay, Chriſt was *peccator & reus*, *a ſinner and guilty*, and deſerving of the curſe, through the guilt of ſins imputed to him. See *Calvin* alſo on *Gal.* iii. 13. *Piſcator* on 2 *Cor.* v. 21. obſerves, that Chriſt being made ſin ſignifies *ſummum peccatorem*, all the ſins of all the elect being imputed to him. And *Marlorat* on the ſame text, has theſe words, that Chriſt died for us, as accurſed of God, and is *peccator omnium ſceleſtiſſimus*. Phraſes as ſtrong as any the Dr. has here or elſewhere; and which, though not contrary to the divine judgment concerning Chriſt as our ſurety, nor derogatory to the perfect purity and holineſs of our Lord, but are deſigned to expreſs the moſt perfect imputation of ſin to him, and the ſecurity of our ſalvation by him, as *Witſius* obſerves, yet I cannot but be of opinion with that ſame great man, that it would be better to abſtain from the uſe of ſuch phraſes; ſince they are not ſcriptural, need much explanation, and may be offenſive to tender minds.—*Animadv. Irenic.* c. i. ſ. 11. c. ii. ſ. 1, 4.

* That Chriſt was numbered by men among tranſgreſſors, is not denied; he was called and traduced by them as a ſinner, and placed between two thieves when crucified, which fulfilled the prophecy of *Iſaiah* in part, *Mark* xiv. 27, 28. But then this being ſuffered by the Lord, ſhews that he was accounted ſo by him, and ſtood in the eye of juſtice as among, and in the place of, tranſgreſſors; and that this is the ſenſe of the paſſage, appears from what follows; *and* or *for he bore the ſins of many*, as *Junius* and *Tremellius* render it; which could be no reaſon with men for ſo numbering him, who knew nothing of his bearing the ſins of others; but is a reaſon with the Lord ſo to account him, ſince he himſelf laid theſe ſins on him.

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The apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks very fully to this buſineſs, in 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. He tells us, That *he himſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree;* he bare our ſins, and it was he himſelf that did it, and it was on his own body: one would think that all theſe words need not; he might have only ſaid, he bare them in his body; but he ſaid more emphatically, *He himſelf bare our ſins in his own body;* he ſpeaks it ſo punctually, that all the world may ſee that there is no underhand, but plain dealing with God in this buſineſs; that ſo we may reſt ſatisfied with it, that being made partakers of Chriſt, our iniquities were laid upon him; and if they ever be looked after, it ſhould be where they are: and this is the main end why there are ſo many expreſſions in ſcripture, that our ſins are laid upon Chriſt, to imply, that when any ſearch is made for them among believers, they may know what is become of them, and ſo ſatisfy themſelves about it: do but obſerve that excellent expreſſion, *Jerem.* l. 20. Where you will find what the great ſcope and end is, why the Holy Ghoſt takes ſuch and ſo much care to let us know, that it is iniquity itſelf that is laid upon Chriſt. *In thoſe days, and at that time, ſhall the iniquities of* Iſrael *be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found.*

Beloved, here is a ſtrange myſtery, the world will not receive it, except they receive this principle we are now upon, namely, that the iniquity itſelf of his people is laid upon the back of Chriſt. What, will ſome ſay, what no iniquity at

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at all found in *Iſrael*, though it be ſearched for narrowly? No, ſaith the prophet, *The iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none. Iſrael* commits ſins every day, you will ſay, and cannot the Lord find them? But the prophet ſaith, he hath laid this iniquity upon Chriſt, therefore it is gone, it cannot be there, and here too; it cannot be on *Iſrael* and on Chriſt. Suppoſe a thief had ſtolen goods, and brought them home to his houſe, a friend comes and takes them away, in favour to ſave his life; there is a privy ſearch made for them in the houſe of the thief, in every corner; how can they find theſe ſtolen goods there, ſuppoſing they are carried away by his friend? They are ſought for, but they are not found, becauſe they are carried away. Even ſo, hence it is, that iniquities are ſought for in *Iſrael*, and there is none, becauſe they are carried away already, and laid upon Chriſt. I will tell you by the way, the reaſon why believers groan ſo heavily under ſuch bitterneſs of ſpirit, diſquietneſs and horror in their conſciences; they think they find their tranſgreſſions there, and imagine that there is a ſting of this poiſon ſtill behind wounding them; but, beloved, if this be received for a truth, that God hath laid thy iniquities on Chriſt, how can they, belonging to him, be found in thy heart and conſcience, if ſo be he hath already transferred them unto him.

Is thy conſcience Chriſt? Either that muſt be Chriſt, or the Lord hath not laid thine iniquities upon him; or elſe thy heart muſt be freed from thy

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thy ſin. I beſeech you conſider of it ſeriouſly; we know not what times are growing upon us, nor what may abide us; we may be cut off from the land of the living, and be in the *Jews* condition, ſubject to bondage all our lives long, through fear of death, and hell; and what is the occaſion and ground of it? it is to have ſin lie cloſe upon your ſpirits: ſeparate ſin from the ſoul, and it hath reſt in the worſt condition: being in the *Jewiſh* condition you will never have full ſatisfaction and ſettled quiet of ſpirit, in reſpect of ſin, till you have received this principle, *That it is iniquity itſelf that the Lord hath laid on Chriſt.* Now, when I ſay with the prophet, it is that itſelf that the Lord hath laid on him, I mean as he doth; it is the fault of the tranſgreſſion itſelf, and to ſpeak more fully, that very erring and ſtraying like ſheep*, is paſſed off from thee, and is laid upon Chriſt: to ſpeak it more plainly, haſt thou been an idolater, a blaſphemer, a deſpiſer of God's word? a trampler upon him, a prophaner of his name and ordinances, a deſpiſer of government, and of thy parents, a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, a liar, a drunkard? Reckon up what thou

* The ſin-offering, which was typical of Chriſt, is called חטאה *ſin* itſelf, erring, going aſtray, or miſſing the mark, as the word ſignifies. See Mr. *Samuel Criſp*'s (the Doctor's ſon) *Chriſt made ſin*, &c. not the guilt and puniſhment of ſin, but the אשמה, the illegality and ſinfulneſs of it were laid on Chriſt, and ſatisfied for by him: ſtrip ſin of this, and it will be an innocent thing, and deſerve no puniſhment; nor could more be inflicted on Chriſt than in proportion to ſin, or what of ſin was laid upon him; and if there is any thing in it, or belongs to it, not bore by him, it muſt be bore by the ſinner himſelf, and upon this ſcheme not one of *Adam*'s race can be ſaved.

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canſt againſt thyſelf; if thou haſt part in the Lord Chriſt, all theſe tranſgreſſions of thine become actually his, and ceaſe to be thine; and thou ceaſeſt to be a tranſgreſſor, from that time they were laid upon him, to the laſt hour of thy life*: ſo that now thou art not an idolater, a perſecutor, a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, or a ſinful perſon; reckon what ſin ſoever you commit, when as you have part in Chriſt, you are all that he was, he is all that you were: 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He was made ſin for us, that knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Mark it well, Chriſt himſelf is not ſo completely righteous, but we are as righteous as he was; nor we ſo completely ſinful, but he became, being made ſin, as completely ſinful as we†; nay more, the righteouſneſs that Chriſt hath with the Father, we are the ſame, for *we are made the righteouſneſs of God;*

* Being Chriſt's by imputation; and though theirs by commiſſion, and not Chriſt's, yet, being bore by him, ſhall not be reckoned to them, or charged upon them, or brought againſt them to their condemnation. See note p. 12, 13.

† But by imputation: Chriſt having all the ſins of his people laid upon him, muſt, in this ſenſe, be reckoned as completely ſinful as they; and they, having his righteouſneſs put on them, muſt be as completely righteous as he; which is to be underſtood, not of his eſſential righteouſneſs as God, nor of the righteouſneſs of his office as mediator, and the faithful diſcharge of that; for they are neither made gods nor mediators; but of that which he wrought out for them, in their room and ſtead, conſiſting of his active and paſſive obedience; "of which, ſays *Witſius*, ſeeing all the elect equally partake, all muſt needs be perfectly righteous, through the ſame moſt perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *æque ac ipſe Chriſtus, equally as Chriſt himſelf*; ſince the righteouſneſs of the elect is the very righteouſneſs of Chriſt itſelf, only with this difference, that it is Chriſt's, becauſe performed by him; ours, becauſe imputed to us." *Animadv. Irenic.* c. vi. ſ. 9.

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and that very ſinfulneſs that we were, Chriſt is made before God; ſo that here is a direct change, Chriſt takes our perſons and condition, and ſtands in our ſtead, we take his perſon and condition, and ſtand in his ſtead. * What the Lord beheld Chriſt to be, that he beholds his members to be; what he beholds them to be in themſelves, that he beholds Chriſt himſelf to be.

So that if you would ſpeak of a ſinner, ſuppoſing him a member of Chriſt, you muſt not ſpeak of what he manifeſts, but of what Chriſt was.

If you would ſpeak of one completely righteous, you muſt ſpeak of him, and know that Chriſt himſelf is not more righteous than he is; and that that perſon is not more ſinful than Chriſt was, when he took his ſins on him; ſo that if you will reckon well, beloved, you muſt always reckon yourſelf in another's perſon, and that other in yours; and until the Lord find out tranſgreſſions of Chriſt's own acting, he will never find one to charge upon you.

Now, we have it profeſſed unto us that *Chriſt was in all things like unto us, ſin only excepted;* and for whatever ſin you have committed, do, or ſhall commit, there was one ſacrifice once offered by Chriſt, through which he hath perfected them that are ſanctified; that ſacrifice of his made the exchange, by virtue of which, we became that which Chriſt was, and he became that which we were; thus the Lord laid iniquity upon him; therefore it is obſervable, the words in the text are indefi-

* See the note in page 301.

nitely

nitely ſpoken, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity*; not this or that iniquity, but the whole bulk of it.

And if this ſeem not enough, that every tranſgreſſion firſt and laſt, great and ſmall, one with another, are carried away at once, and laid upon Chriſt; mark that well, in 1 *John* i. 7. it is as clear as the light; *For the blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin.* [*All*] it is an admirable word though it be never ſo ſmall; not paſt ſins only, but preſent ſins; the perſon that belongs to Chriſt is acquit of all tranſgreſſions, that whatever he commits, it is as if he never committed any in the world.

1. As for that objection about guilt, that the Lord lays the guilt and puniſhment, but not ſimply the ſin itſelf, for ought that I ſee, it is a ſimple one; for, you ſhall never find this diſtinction in all the ſcripture, that God laid the guilt of ſin upon Chriſt, and not that itſelf; as for the guilt of ſin, it is not mentioned in all the ſcripture, that God lays it, or that Chriſt bears it; nay further, to affirm, that the Lord laid upon Chriſt the guilt of ſin, and not the ſin itſelf, is directly contrary to ſcripture; for you have many teſtimonies affirming, that the Lord lays ſin upon him; what preſumption then is it for a man to ſay, he lays on Chriſt the guilt, and not the ſin itſelf!

2. That you may have a little more light concerning this word guilt; for I know many ſpirits are troubled about it: for my part, I do not think as ſome do, that guilt differs from ſin, as that

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that which is an obligation or a binding over to the punishment of sin, rather than sin itself being past and gone: but that you may have the true nature of it opened, I will give you an instance, *Gen.* xliv. 21. When *Joseph*'s brethren were accused for spies, it is said, they spake one to another, *We are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear.* What is the meaning of *guilty* here? *Reuben* expounds it in verse 22. *Did not I say to you, sin not against the lad? but you would not hearken unto me,* and therefore behold we are *guilty:* what is that? we sinned against the child; to be guilty, therefore, and to commit sin, is all one; they are but two words expressing the same thing: now that you may understand the word *guilt* better, suppose a malefactor be asked, guilty or not guilty? he answers, not guilty; what doth he mean? he means he hath not done that fact which was laid to his charge: when the jury is asked guilty or not guilty? The jury saith, guilty; what do they mean? Do they mean any thing in respect of punishment? No; the jury hath nothing to do with that, but only with matter of fact; that is, whether the fact be done or not; so that to be guilty or not guilty, is to say the fact is done or not; guilt and sin are all one: where lies the difference? The guilt is upon Christ, but the sin itself is laid upon a man's own person; as much as to say, sin is laid upon Christ, but it is not laid upon him, that is just a contradiction: and whereas it is affirmed by some, that the Lord laid the punishment

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niſhment of ſin on Chriſt, and not the ſin, that is falſe; though it be true that he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, yet it doth not follow that he did not bear them; that ſcripture that warrants us that the puniſhment was laid upon Chriſt, warrants us, that ſin itſelf was laid upon him: why do we believe that the puniſhment was laid upon Chriſt, but becauſe the Holy Ghoſt hath revealed it unto us? The ſame hath revealed to us, that ſin itſelf is laid upon him, as well as the puniſhment; he that rejects the one, rejects the other.

But, to ſum up all, beloved; the truth is, Satan is very cunning, and, for a while, allows Chriſt the bearing of the guilt and puniſhment, that ſo he may take away his bearing iniquity; the truth is, if iniquity be not really transferred to Chriſt, there is neither the guilt nor the puniſhment of our ſins upon him. And obſerve theſe three things,

(1.) If iniquity itſelf had not been laid upon Chriſt, it had been the extremeſt injuſtice in the world for the Lord to have bruiſed him. That it was the Lord's own act, beſides the *Jews*, is manifeſt; the apoſtles jointly concluded that they did nothing but what was by the determinate counſel and purpoſe of God; nay, in this liii. of *Iſaiah*, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith expreſsly, *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him;* well, then, the act of bruiſing is God's; if he himſelf will bruiſe his Son, he hath ſome reaſon for it; vindictive juſtice on a perſon, of neceſſity implies ſome fault committed. The Lord complaineth of his own people, that they ſhould ſay, *The fathers have eaten ſour grapes,*

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grapes, and the childrens teeth are ſet on edge; that is, men ſhould be puniſhed without fault; how could the Father poſſibly thus ſcourge his own Son, and yet have nothing to lay to his charge? He doth not acquit him from any ſin of his own; *He did no violence* at all: if, therefore, Chriſt had not the faults of his own members become his; and, that the Lord did thus bruiſe him, as having theſe upon him, he had been bruiſed for nothing.

Suppoſe a man ſhould be caſt into goal and arraigned, and, though there be nothing found againſt him, yet the judge will hang him; what juſtice is there in this? Beloved, if our ſins be not transferred to Chriſt, and found upon him at the arraignment of God, he ſhould have been found complete and abſolutely innocent; and then, for the Lord to puniſh him, when he had nothing to lay to his charge, had been injuſtice in him. That God, therefore, might be juſt in puniſhing Chriſt, and do no more upon him than what was deſerved, he muſt firſt have the iniquity laid upon him, that is, the merit of that bruiſing; that there might be upon him the deſert of what he did ſuſtain.

(2.) Suppoſe Chriſt be bruiſed, and our iniquities not laid to his charge, what are we the better for it? Suppoſe a man dies for a fault, what is this to a thief whoſe fault he doth not bear in his ſuffering? He muſt ſuffer for his own fault, till it be laid upon the perſon of another; and being laid upon him, this other ſuffers for him. Suppoſe a man be caſt into priſon for debt, and another after him; what is the caſting in of the ſecond, to the

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firſt, except it be as a ſurety to the firſt; then, indeed, the firſt may be acquitted by the impriſonment of the ſecond; but if the ſecond doth not lie in for the debt of the firſt, the firſt muſt ſuffer, as if the ſecond had not ſuffered at all; Chriſt was wounded and bruiſed; what is that to the perſon whoſe iniquities he doth not bear?

If Chriſt did not ſuffer for your tranſgreſſions, what is that to you if he ſuffered ten times more than he did? The truth is, beloved, juſtice, as a blood-hound, follows the ſcent of blood, and ſeizes wherever it finds it *. If a deer-ſteeler ſhall caſt off his garment of blood, and another, that did not ſteal, ſhould take it on, the blood-hound would faſten upon him that is not the thief; but, if the thief himſelf bears the blood of his own garment, the blood-hound will faſten on him: and ſo will juſtice do; if Chriſt doth not take our ſins upon himſelf, juſtice will purſue us, that have our blood upon ourſelves, and ſo conſequently give us up to wrath: but, if Chriſt take our blood, juſtice will follow him, and ſeize upon him, as if he had been the very perſon acting the ſin. If juſtice do not find the blood upon him, it never purſues him, but it purſues the perſon † where this blood remains; it will faſten wherever it finds it.

(3.) Whence ſhould it be, in reſpect of the event, that the elect and reprobate differ one from the other? The difference lies in this, the elect ſhall be ſaved, and the reprobate ſhall be damned ‡;

* Mat. xxii. 13. Rev. xx. 15. † Mat. vii. 23.
‡ Rom. ix. 22. Heb. vi. 8.

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the immediate cauſe is this, the reprobate bears his own ſin, by reaſon of which he bears his enſuing damnation; the elect perſon bears not his own ſin, and ſo there is nothing found againſt him, for which he ſhould be damned. Now, ſuppoſe that Chriſt leaves iniquity ſtill remaining upon him that is elected, and the ſin be found upon him, as well as upon a reprobate, ſin would bring the ſame deſert that it doth upon the reprobate. The firſt beginning of the difference is in this, Chriſt takes away the ſins of the one, and leaves the ſins upon the other ſtill, and they bear the puniſhment in this and in the world to come. But, as for the elect, the Lord takes the iniquities of them, and tranſlates them upon Chriſt, who, in that regard, bears all the wrath due to them for them; and ſo they become diſcharged from puniſhment, both in this life and in the life to come. The truth is, wherever ſin is, the juſtice of God will have plenary ſatisfaction, even for all the ſins in the world, either by the ſinner himſelf, or by ſome ſurety for him; Chriſt, ſeeing he hath taken the ſins of the elect upon him, muſt pay the full value; and his pay muſt be as full as the reprobates in hell; for God will have the utmoſt farthing. This is the difference between an elect perſon, and a reprobate; Chriſt firſt paid all that for them, which they, with the reprobate, ſhould otherwiſe have paid, in their own perſons, in hell; and, therefore, you can conceive no real difference between them and you, if Chriſt doth not bear your ſins upon himſelf.

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A word of application, and ſo I will have done; and that ſhall be but one. If it be iniquity itſelf that is laid upon Chriſt, then, beloved, ſee what cauſe you have to take up all your time to be his; that being his, and receiving the grace of God adminiſtered unto you by him, you may ſee what cauſe you have to take up the triumph of the apoſtle; *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth.* It is a ſweet ſong, beloved, and a ſong of ſongs indeed, and there is mighty ſtrength in the argument: here is firſt a queſtion, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* Who is it? Some will ſay, It is God, I fear; I fear not men, they cannot do it; I fear God will lay ſomething to my charge: if there be ſin, it is againſt him; if there be any wrath, it is he that muſt pour it out: all that I fear is God. Nay, fear not, ſaith the apoſtle, *It is God that juſtifieth;* therefore never fear that he will lay any thing to thy charge. Can God ſay, I pronounce thee innocent, and juſtify thee from thy ſin; and will he, with the ſame breath ſay, I have this and that other ſin to lay to thy charge? This were a contradiction. If any man in the world will offer to do it, they have nothing to do in this work; it is God, and he only charges with ſin; and if he doth it not, who can do it! Nay, *Chriſt is dead, nay rather is riſen again;* as if he ſhould have ſaid, The Lord laid our iniquities upon him; he made him to bear the burthen of all, and it ſunk him to death, and he was caſt into the gaol for the debt; now we ſee him come out.

Seeing

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Seeing God is ſo exact that he will have the utmoſt farthing, it is certain he is quit, becauſe he is delivered; he is freed, *He is not dead, but is riſen.* Oh! beloved, how comfortably might you walk in all conditions in the world, if you did but carry this in your breaſt! Well, come what will, I am quit of all my ſins, I ſtand innocent; for Chriſt himſelf hath ſatisfied the Father to the full for them, and he will never remember them again.

Mark but one paſſage of ſcripture, and I will conclude, 2 *Cor.* v. 19,---21. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them, and made him to be ſin for us.* Mark, in the buſineſs of transferring ſin to Chriſt, God's order; when he will do all with Chriſt for men's ſins, he gives to them a full acquittance; he cancels his bonds, ſo that he will have nothing in the world to ſhew againſt him, ſo it imports: as for the world (believers I mean) *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them;* that is, he will not have a word more to ſay to them; he will not have a ſin more to charge upon them; but, as for Chriſt, he ſhall be made ſin; that is the reaſon why God gives them a diſcharge, becauſe he hath found out one that is mighty to bear it, as you have it in *Pſal.* lxxxix. 19. *Thou ſpakeſt in viſion to thy Holy One, I have laid help upon one that is mighty:* as if he ſhould have ſaid to Chriſt, I have a company of broken creatures; for a debt that is owing me I could puniſh them for ever, but I ſhould never

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never pay myſelf out of them; now I have found thee, a perſon able to pay; and, ſeeing I have found thee ſo, I will take it here: I will pay myſelf out of thee.

In *Heb.* vii. 22. you have a notable expreſſion of Chriſt; *Wherefore*, (ſaith the apoſtle) *he is the ſurety of a better teſtament:* God takes Chriſt as a ſurety; look as men will do, ſo deals God with him. A rich ſurety is bound for a broken debtor, that is not worth a groat; what will the creditor do in this caſe? He will never look after the beggar; he knows there is nothing to be looked for there; he will look after the rich man; the rich man muſt ſtand to it; let him look to it, he ſhall pay it: ſo doth God; Chriſt is become the ſurety of a better covenant; man is a broken debtor, and Chriſt is a ſurety, one that is rich, and able to pay, therefore God will look after none but him; for this cauſe Chriſt gives his own ſingle bond, and God is content to take it, and looks for no other paymaſter but him. You know, when a ſurety becomes bound, inſtead of the principal, the ſurety is as much the principal, after he is bound, as the principal was the debtor before: ſo Chriſt, being a ſurety, not only ſtands liable to the payment of the debt, but he actually ſtands the debtor, upon which ground the payment may be exacted: for, except the perſon be a debtor, there can be no juſt claim of payment; therefore the ſurety is a real debtor; nay, Chriſt being our ſurety, is become ſole debtor; God hath not only taken him to be ſurety, but, upon Chriſt's coming

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coming and giving his bond, he cancels the bond, that now we are as free as if we never had been bound.

SERMON XVIII.

Sin tranſacted really upon Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I Entered upon theſe words, not far from hence, the laſt Lord's day; and, becauſe ſome deſired further light in the truth contained in them, I thought it not amiſs to communicate ſomething more, that light may ſhine forth from them.

The whole chapter ſets out Chriſt abundantly, with raviſhing ſweetneſs: in this text, and the verſe before it, is contained the ſum of the whole goſpel of Chriſt, the fountain of all the glad tidings publiſhed to the ſons of men. Here the Holy Ghoſt tells us, how God diſpoſes of our ſins, then of the deſert of them, and what the fruit of this diſpoſing is; *He laid the iniquities of us all upon him;*

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him; He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions. The fruit is, 1. Peace by his chaſtiſement. 2. Healing by his ſtripes. The words of the text are ſo many propoſitions or doctrines; there are theſe particulars contained in them:

1. What it is the Lord laid on Chriſt, *Iniquity.* 2. How the Lord diſpoſes of it, *He laid it on him.* 3. Whoſe iniquities he lays on him, *The iniquities of us all,* ſuch as have gone aſtray. 4. When he laid them on him, the thing is paſt, *He hath laid,* it is already done. We have conſidered the *firſt* of theſe particulars, *That it is iniquity itſelf that the Lord laid upon Chriſt;* not barely puniſhment, leaving iniquity behind; but iniquity itſelf is laid upon him. I cannot ſtand to repeat all particularly; I will, therefore, fall at once upon the *ſecond* thing, *viz.* How the Lord diſpoſes of this iniquity, *The Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all upon him;* let that be the propoſition, putting the emphaſis upon the word *laid.* If ever there be joy, peace, and reſt of ſpirit, or thou wilt be of good cheer, as having knowledge of thy ſins being forgiven, it muſt be fetched out of this, *The Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all upon Chriſt.* Men may ſuppoſe comfort and joy, and, in the ſtrength of their fancy, peradventure, be at ſome kind of reſt out of ſome other apprehenſions; but there is no ſolid reſt to any, but as it is founded on this, that iniquity is laid upon Chriſt. Satan knows this well enough, and therefore he raiſeth a cloud of duſt (as I may ſo ſay) to obſcure the glorious light of the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhining forth in this truth:

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truth: there is ſuch a ſtir to ſhift off the plain genuine meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, that the truth is, perſons ſcarce know where to find reſt for the ſole of their feet, in reſpect of peace, through the forgiveneſs of ſins. And indeed, beloved, as the covenant of God is peculiar only to thoſe that ſhall partake of the fulneſs of Chriſt; ſo none ſhall truly and thoroughly underſtand ſuch truths as theſe, but thoſe that are taught of God himſelf; which is one branch of the covenant, *They ſhall be all taught of* me.

That we may the better underſtand what evangelical ſweetneſs is wrapped up in this truth, let us a little conſider, what this phraſe imports, according to the true meaning of the Holy Ghoſt. A great deal of ſhuffling there is about it, that the ſpirits of men can hardly receive it, or take it in plain *Engliſh*, *That iniquity is laid upon Chriſt*: by it, men generally conceive a kind of connivance of God; as if the Lord took notice, that this, and that, and the other perſon indeed bear tranſgreſſion, but he forbears him, and will for the preſent purpoſe, that it is upon Chriſt; and ſo by laying its iniquity upon him, it muſt be no more, but God will be contented to eſteem and think, iniquity is upon him; while indeed, and in truth, it remains where it was, upon the man himſelf that committed it.

But, beloved, under favour, I muſt be bold to tell you, that while men ſeek to vindicate God one way in this kind, they extremely abuſe him in another; for if this be truth, that God only counts

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counts or ſuppoſes iniquity upon Chriſt, whilſt he knows well enough, it is yet upon this, and that perſon, and he himſelf bears it; mark what will follow; what will you call this eſteem of God? Is it ſuch an eſteem and ſuppoſition, that is righteous or falſe? Suppoſe a man ſpeak of things, not according to the truth of the nature of the thing, but it is otherwiſe than he ſpeaks of it; in this caſe, I would know whether ſuch a ſpeech be true or falſe: the truth of ſpeech depends upon this, when that, and the thing whereof it is made, do agree together; if they agree, the ſpeech is true; if it tends one way, and the thing itſelf another, it is falſe: now then ſpeeches are true or falſe, according to the truth of the thing ſpoken of; ſo are the thoughts and ſuppoſitions of the mind; for all theſe are but the work, or ſpeech of it; therefore if the mind think of things, and theſe be otherwiſe, is it a true or falſe thought? a true one it cannot be, becauſe it is not conſonant to the thing thought of, ſo there is a miſtake: but further, ſuppoſe a man know certainly beforehand, a thing is otherwiſe than he ſpeaks, or than he thinks it to be, what call you this? This muſt be more than ſimply or barely a falſehood; in common acceptation this is no better than a lie; a man knows that a thing is thus and thus, yet he ſaith it is otherwiſe: ſuppoſe, I know a man is in ſuch a place, and I will think him in another, what is this better than a lie? Now to come to the point in hand, *The Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt:* what is that? he will ſuppoſe, think, or take it for

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for granted, that iniquity is on Chriſt, but he knows it is on the perſons themſelves ſtill; ſee how God muſt be charged by men that run into ſuch a ſtrain as this; at the beſt they charge him with miſtakes; for if he knows that the ſins of men remain ſtill upon themſelves, and yet will ſuppoſe they do not, but are on Chriſt, is this ſuppoſition according to the true being of the thing or no? Certainly, beloved, that all-wiſe, all-knowing, all-ſearching God, hath no other thoughts of things than as they are; as he himſelf either makes or diſpoſes of them, he eſteems and thinks of them, ſo conſequently of ſin. If he ſays, *He lays, or hath laid, iniquity upon Chriſt*, and hath diſcharged the believer from all iniquity; certainly God ſuppoſes and eſteems things to be thus, as he hath diſpoſed of them.

Indeed, let us not make God ſo childiſh: if he laid iniquity on Chriſt, he paſt this real act upon him, and the thing is thus really, as he diſpoſes of it; and therefore, in brief, this laying iniquity upon him, is ſuch a tranſlation of ſin from thoſe, whoſe iniquity he lays upon him; that by it he now becomes, or did become, when they were laid, as really and truly the perſon that had all theſe ſins, as thoſe men who did commit them really and truly, had them themſelves; it is true, as I ſaid before, Chriſt never ſinned in all his life; *He did no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth*; but this hinders not, but that there may be on him an abſolute tranſaction; ſo that by laying iniquity on him, he becomes the ſole perſon in the

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the behalf of all the elect, that truly hath iniquity upon him.

For the better clearing of this, give me leave to open a few expreſſions of ſcripture that ſpeak to the ſame effect, and peradventure ſome will give better light than others; obſerve, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. Having ſpoken of being reconciled unto believers, he tells us, *He*, that is, Chriſt, *was made ſin for us:* here is not only ſin itſelf charged upon him, but it is expreſſed, how God charged it, *He was made ſin;* and this word made ſin, hath more in it to ſhew the reality of ſin being upon Chriſt, by way of tranſaction, than the word laid: if you read the marginal notes upon our text, you ſhall perceive how tranſlators render it; the Lord, ſaith the margin, made all our ſins to meet upon him; the text, as we read it, runs, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;* now what is it for a thing to be made? is it but a mere imaginary ſuppoſition or fancy? doth not the word (make) conſtitute the reality of the being of ſuch a thing that is made? If you will know what it is to be made ſin more fully, look into *Rom.* v. 19. *As by one man's diſobedience many were made ſinners, ſo by the obedience of one many are made righteous:* what is the meaning of that being made ſinners? the whole drift (as you may plainly ſee) of the apoſtle, is to compare the reſtoration of perſons by Chriſt, with the fall of them by *Adam.* It is true, men are made ſinners two ways, they are made ſinners fruitfully by *Adam;* there is not only an univerſal ſin caſt over all mankind, but there is a fruitfulneſs

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to commit it; but the apoſtle's drift in that place is to ſhew, that the perſonal tranſgreſſion of *Adam* in eating the forbidden fruit, became the ſin of all the men of the world, even before they themſelves did either good or evil; from whence *David* ſaith in *Pſal.* li. 5. *In ſin was I conceived*: now *David*, when he was conceived, had not himſelf perſonally ſinned, neither was ſin fruitful in him, to do evil himſelf; and yet he, even then, was made ſin by the diſobedience of one; now what is this? is it merely to be ſuppoſed or imagined to have ſin? or is not there a reality of guilt, or of ſin upon men by *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion? The apoſtle ſaith expreſly, *By the diſobedience of one, many were made ſinners*: and it appears, that we are actual, that is to ſay, real ſinners, by that very ſin of his; that is, ſeparate from tranſgreſſions, in our own perſons: if then, a making perſons ſinners, conſtitute a thing really in being, and not merely in imagination; it muſt follow, that Chriſt being made ſin, or ſin being laid upon him, is a real act; God really paſſes over ſin upon him, ſtill keeping this fact, that Chriſt ſinned not; ſo that in reſpect of this act, not one ſin of the believer is Chriſt's *, but in reſpect of tranſgreſſion, the conveyance of it, or paſſing accounts from one head to another, there is a reality of making Chriſt

* This clearly ſhews the ſenſe in which the Dr. is always to be underſtood; that the ſins of believers become Chriſt's, not in reſpect of the act, as done by him, but as debts become thoſe who are ſurety for others; in which, as there is a real paſſing of debts over to them, ſo there is a real paſſing over of ſins to Chriſt.

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to be ſin. When one man becomes a debtor in another's room, legally and by conſent; this ſurety that becomes the debtor, is not barely ſuppoſed to be ſo, but by undertaking it, and legally having it paſſed upon him, he is as really and truly the debtor, as he was, that was the principal before: ſo that there is an abſolute truth and reality of God's act in paſſing over, and laying ſins upon Chriſt. If a judge would think ſuch a man to be a malefactor, when in his own conſcience he knows he is not, and upon his thought that he is, will actually hang him, is there any juſtice in ſuch an act? If God will but ſuppoſe Chriſt to have ſin upon him, and knows that he hath it not, but others have it upon them; and upon this ſuppoſition will execute Chriſt, what will you call this? As I ſaid before, there muſt of neceſſity be a preſent deſert upon a perſon, before the judge can inflict any thing upon him; a fault muſt be found upon a man, before he may be executed legally and juſtly; therefore the fault muſt be found really upon Chriſt himſelf, before there can be an act of God's juſtice in wounding him.

You have another phraſe expreſſing the ſame thing, *Iſaiah* liii. 11, 12. *He ſhall bear the ſins of many:* now what is it to bear a thing? Doth a man bear a thing merely in a way of ſuppoſition? or where there is a *bearing*, is there not a real weight? This I am ſure of, where the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of men's *bearing their ſin*, he ſpeaks of ſuch a thing as ſhall lie heavy upon men: in *Leviticus* you have it often expreſſed, *And they ſhall bear their iniquities;*

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iniquities; ſpeaking of perſons that ſhould be rejected and caſt off: what is this bearing, but that ſin ſhould be found upon men, having a weight which ſhall be able to cruſh, bow, and break them? *My ſoul* (ſaith Chriſt) *is heavy unto death*; and thus he ſpake before he ſuffered any real bodily pain; how came it to be heavy, if there were not ſome weight that he bore? if he did bear iniquity, and not the weight of it on him, how can his ſoul be heavy? nothing is bowed down, except there be ſome real burthen borne that ſhould do it: ſo that there muſt therefore be ſin really paſt upon Chriſt, or elſe he could never ſtoop and bow, and be ſo heavy loaded as he was.

There is one phraſe more in *John* i. 29. by the way, give me leave to tell you, that whereas it is generally received, that *John* prepared the way of Chriſt, and therefore is called his fore-runner, becauſe he went in a way of beating down and breaking in pieces; you ſhall find, I ſay, that his main buſineſs, for which he is called the preparer of the way of the Lord, was; he pointed with his finger to Chriſt, that ſo people might now ſee him whom they expected; *Behold* (ſaith he) *the Lamb of God that takes away the ſin of the world:* I ſay, this was his main buſineſs, to point out Chriſt, that people might ſee him now to be come; and for this very cauſe, he is ſaid to *prepare the way of the Lord:* what is the taking away of ſin? it is worth conſideration, beloved; it cannot ſink into the head of any reaſonable perſon, though he be but merely natural,

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tural, that a thing ſhould be taken away, and yet be left behind; it is a flat contradiction: if a man be to receive money at ſuch a place, and he takes it away with him, is it left in the place where it was, when he hath taken it away? the Lamb of God, Chriſt, takes away the ſins of the world, and doth he leave them behind him? it is a contradiction: look *Lev.* xvi. 21, 22. where you have that moſt admirable type of all the types of Chriſt mentioned, and that is the type of the ſcape-goat; and there you will plainly perceive what it is for iniquity to be laid upon Chriſt, and how far forth it concerns the believer; *And* Aaron *ſhall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confeſs over him all the iniquities of the children of* Iſrael, *and all their tranſgreſſions and ſins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and ſhall ſend him away into the wilderneſs, and the goat ſhall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited, and they ſhall let go the goat into the wilderneſs.* There was a goat ſlain, and a live one ſent into the wilderneſs, that is, Chriſt dying and Chriſt living: it is true, our ſins are laid upon Chriſt dying, that ſatisfied for them; but the diſcharge of our ſins, or receiving the acquittance, is from Chriſt alive or riſen. Now as this ſcape-goat muſt have the ſins of the people laid upon the head of him, and, when laid, muſt go into the wilderneſs, and carry their ſins with him; juſt ſo doth Chriſt with the ſins of believers: God lays iniquities upon him, namely, by transferring them upon him, that he takes them away, and carries them into a land of forgetfulneſs, into the

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the wilderneſs, a land not inhabited; that is, into a place that they ſhall not be heard of any more: therefore, the Lord, in the cloſure of the new covenant, ſhuts it up thus, *Your ſins and your iniquities will I remember no more.* How ſo? He hath carried them away into a land not inhabited; he hath taken them away, and, therefore, they are not left behind upon the perſon whoſe they were, till Chriſt took them away; though I ſay, ſtill the perſon of a believer daily, hourly, every moment, renews ſeveral acts, which, in their own nature, are ſins; they commit ſuch things that are not according to the revealed word of God; yet, Chriſt being become the *ſurety of a better teſtament*, ſtill has taken off every tranſgreſſion which ariſes; he died not for preſent and paſt ſins only, *but for the ſins of the whole world*; that is, for all the ſins of all *his elect* people at once, both Gentiles as well as Jews, even to the end of the world; he hath taken and carried them away.

There are many objections, I know, ariſing in the hearts of men, yea even of believers themſelves, till they come to be more and more enlightened, againſt this reality of tranſacting ſin upon Chriſt, by which the perſon of a believer is acquitted: ſome of them are gathered out of phraſes of ſcripture; others are raiſed up from reaſon; ſome are maintained by common and natural ſenſe. I ſhall endeavour (as clearly as poſſibly I may) to anſwer thoſe of greateſt moment, that people may be ſatisfied in the truth.

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Againſt ſuch reality of tranſacting ſin upon Chriſt, there is one phraſe of the apoſtle *Paul*, very much objected, and that is [*imputing*]; and hence, ſay ſome, God's laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, is nothing elſe but God's imputing ſin to him. Now this word [*imputation*] in the common underſtanding of people ordinarily, ſeems to carry ſomething different in it from the real act of transferring ſin from a believer unto Chriſt; it ſeems to ſignify only a ſuppoſition or connivance. Give me leave to open this word [*imputing*] to you; I am confident it ſtumbles many a perſon, not underſtanding the true meaning of the Holy Ghoſt in it; and I ſhall endeavour to clear it to you out of ſcripture itſelf. *Firſt*, That which I ſhall anſwer for the imputation of ſin to Chriſt, is this; though I have ſearched the ſcripture as narrowly as poſſibly I may, yet, this I find, that throughout the whole there is not one paſſage of it that ſpeaks of imputing our ſins to Chriſt: in *Rom.* iv. the word *imputation*, and that which is equivalent to it, *accounting*, and *reckoning*, are ſeven times mentioned; and, in chap. v. 13. it is mentioned again; but ſtill where the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of *imputation*, he ſpeaks of ſin not imputed, and of righteouſneſs imputed to us; but not once of ſin imputed unto Chriſt*: ſo that if we put this objection off

* Not that the Doctor was againſt the imputation of ſin to Chriſt, or thought it an unſcriptural doctrine; for it is the very thing, under different phraſes, he is all along, in theſe diſcourſes, contending for; and he makes uſe of it himſelf, p. 16; but what he militates againſt is, as ſome people underſtood it, as if it was a thing imaginary, which was only ſuppoſed of Chriſt, and

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off as not being the phraſe of ſcripture, it might be a full anſwer.

But, ſome will ſay, there is that which is equivalent to it; for if ſin be not imputed unto us, and righteouſneſs is; as we partake of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, ſo he partakes of our ſin; we partake of his righteouſneſs by imputation, therefore he partakes of our ſin by imputation.

I will not contend about words; we will take it for granted, that it is conſonant to ſcripture, that our ſins are imputed unto Chriſt; all the difficulty lies in the true underſtanding of the word *imputation*; how ſhall we find it? Look into *Lev.* xvii. 4. that will give light into it; *What man ſoever there be of the houſe of* Iſrael, *that kills an ox*, &c. *blood ſhall be imputed unto that man, he hath ſhed blood, and that man ſhall be cut off from among his people.* Now, beloved, mark what the meaning of the word imputed is; it is no more but this, as he is truly and really guilty of blood, ſo he ſhall really and truly go for a bloody man: imputation here, you ſee plainly, hath reference to the truth and reality of the thing; he hath ſhed blood, and therefore blood ſhall be imputed to him.

Again, look into 1 *Sam.* xxii. 15. where you ſhall find *Abimelech* pleading hard with *Saul*, for his own life, and for the lives of his houſhold: it

and not real; which ſenſe he ſets aſide, and is his view in producing the objections he does; and ſettles the true ſenſe of it by *reckoning* and *accounting*, which illuſtrates the true nature of imputation, as he after obſerves; and in which ſenſe he readily allows it, as not being oppoſite to a real act of God in transferring ſin to Chriſt; which is the thing his heart was ſet upon to prove, and to beat into the minds of men.

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ſeems *Saul* charged *Abimelech*, that he had relieved *David* with victuals and arms againſt him; for which cauſe, *Saul* calls him forth, to the end he might deſtroy him for it; now mark how *Abimelech* pleads for himſelf; *Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? be it far from me, let not the king impute any thing to his ſervant:* what is the meaning of *impute* here? Firſt, *Abimelech* acquits himſelf from being faulty in what *Saul* charged upon him; he did no ſuch thing, he was accuſed of, hereupon, ſaith he, *Let not the king impute any ſuch thing to me;* as much as to ſay, let the king determine and conclude of things according as really and truly they are: this is the meaning of the word there.

Again, look into *Rom.* v. 13. you ſhall ſee there again the word *impute*, is taken in the ſame ſenſe; the apoſtle ſaith, *But ſin is not imputed where there is no law;* now mark in chap. iv 15. *Where there is no law, there is no tranſgreſſion;* put theſe two together, the meaning muſt be this; God imputes no ſin where he finds no law tranſgreſſed; that is, there is no ſin in being, where there is no law tranſgreſſed; and therefore he ſo determines and concludes of the thing. God's determining of things according as indeed they are, is his imputing things evermore.

Look into *Rom.* iv. 3. 4. There are two words that illuſtrate the nature of imputation, and they are theſe, *accounting* and *reckoning;* now enquire and underſtand the real and common uſe of theſe words, to *account* and *reckon:* ſuppoſe men are to

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paſs an account, for that is the proper meaning of the word; to *account*, is to paſs an account; and, upon the balance, there is ſo much money accounted to ſuch a man; what is the meaning of it? Is it not that there is really ſo much money due to this man? And ſo, for the word *reckoning*, what is that? You know how ordinary it is for men to reckon together; for accounting and reckoning are all one. Men caſt up their accounts, and, upon the caſting of them up, they find this and that due; that is, they reckon that ſuch a man oweth ſo much: ſo that underſtanding the courſe of ſcripture, and the common uſe of the phraſes of *reckoning* and *accounting*; you ſhall find that *imputing* is nothing but God's determination and concluſion that he paſſes upon things, as really and truly they are, without imagining things to be ſo and ſo, when indeed, and in truth, they are not ſo.

There is a ſecond paſſage of ſcripture that is much objected againſt this reality of God's paſſing ſin upon Chriſt, that is in *Rom.* iv. 17. and, indeed, at firſt glance, it ſeems to carry ſome ſtrength with it, that there is not a reality in the thing, but that God is contented to account it ſo; *He calleth thoſe things that be not, as though they were.* Some may ſuppoſe, that the Holy Ghoſt here imports to us, that it may well ſtand with God, though ſins are not indeed upon Chriſt, yet to call them ſo, as if they were upon him.

But, beloved, give me leave to give you the true ſcope of the apoſtle in this place; and you ſhall plainly perceive, that this is broken ſenſe, wholly

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wholly torn away from his true meaning in it: mark it well, I pray; the apoſtle, in the beginning of this chapter, tells us of God's promiſe made to *Abraham*, recited *Gen.* xvii. 5. *I have made thee a father of many nations.* Now, becauſe this promiſe was ſpoken before *Abraham* actually had children, and, when his body was dead in a manner, and ſo was not; hereupon he takes upon him to commend the faith of *Abraham*, that he ſhould build upon the word of God, when there was ſo little likelihood of the thing; it was all one as if it were not at all; and he ſhews the ground whereupon he built with ſo much confidence, even the power of God, that makes things that are not, when he hath ſaid the word, to be. So that the meaning of the place, is only this, though *Abraham* was not, that is he was dead unto fruitfulneſs, yet the Lord having ſaid, he would make him *a father of many nations*, calls him as fruitful a perſon as he that was moſt ſo, though for the preſent he was not; ſo that, for the meaning of it, the utmoſt that can be made is this, that God, in reſpect of his power to bring to paſs, when he ſaith the word, will call things as if they were preſent in being, when they are not, but in time ſhall be.

But what is this to the preſent purpoſe, if God did not really transfer ſin to Chriſt, nor never meant to do it? For if he hath not done it already, he never will; I ſay, if he neither hath nor will, how doth this place prove that *he calls things that are not, as though they were?* This is certain, beloved, though all things that ever ſhall be in the

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the world, are moſt preſent to the Lord at once; for ſo they may be ſaid to be, in reſpect of him, though, as to the things themſelves, they yet are not; yet, in all the ſcripture, you ſhall never find the Lord expreſſing himſelf ſo; he never calls things thus and thus, when they never are, nor never ſhall be. If Chriſt has not already borne the ſins of men himſelf, then certainly he never ſhall; for he is not now to do any more, to compaſs any thing not compaſſed; and if neither heretofore ſin hath been, nor hereafter ſhall be, laid upon him, how can God call that which was not, nor never ſhall be, as if it were?

There is, therefore, beloved, a certain tranſacting of ſin upon Chriſt, ſo real, that, indeed, the believer, though an actor of tranſgreſſion, is as abſolutely and truly diſcharged of his ſins, as if he himſelf had not committed them. As a debtor, when the ſurety hath taken the debt on him, and the debtor receives an acquittance, he is as free of the debt as if he had never run into it: ſo, I ſay, it is with believers, Chriſt being made *a ſurety of a better teſtament*; and, thereby becoming really and truly the debtor inſtead of them; he ſo bears all the debt himſelf, that they are altogether releaſed and diſcharged, as if they had never been in debt. Still, I ſay, this hinders not, but that there is committing of ſin every day by the believer; but yet the virtue of Chriſt's ſuretyſhip takes it off as ſoon as ever it is committed; nay, he hath a *proviſo*, a ſtock * in bank to ſatisfy for it before the commiſſion of it.

* Cant. vii. 13. Pſal. xxxi. 19.

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Now, beloved, as there are many ſtrong objections out of many paſſages of ſcripture; ſo, likewiſe, are there many ſtrong ones, as many conceive, from natural ſenſe and reaſon; which, yet, being well weighed and conſidered, will vaniſh into ſmoke. I could willingly go on to anſwer theſe, but the time at preſent will not permit.

SERMON XIX.

Sin tranſacted really upon Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I Have elſewhere (as ſome of you know) entered upon theſe words, which afford divers notable, ſweet, ſoul-refreſhing truths; every word having its weight. 1. It was iniquity that the Lord laid upon Chriſt. 2. The Lord hath laid this upon him. This *laying* of our iniquity upon Chriſt, carries a deal of life in it; it weighs down the ſcale by which we mount. Now, by laying iniquity, the Holy Ghoſt means plainly ſuch a taking

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taking away, and bearing of it by Chriſt, that the believer, whoſe iniquity he bears, is wholly diſcharged of it, as if he had never committed any at all. This laying of iniquity is not a mere ſuppoſition of God, that Chriſt now bears ſin, while the believer in deed and truth bears it himſelf; but it is ſuch a real act of God transferring the ſin of a believer from him unto Chriſt, as when a ſurety ſtands in the room of a debtor, the debtor is by this acquitted of the debt, and the ſurety is as really the debtor now, as the debtor himſelf was before. It is true, where principal and ſurety are in a joint bond, the debtor lies open as well as the ſurety, and the ſurety as the debtor; but if the ſurety will come into the room of the debtor, he is ſo become the debtor, that the principal is now as free as if he had owed nothing. I uſe it as a demonſtration, becauſe it is the apoſtle's own, *He is made the ſurety of a better teſtament.* I cannot inſiſt at large upon what I have formerly delivered; the ſum is this, God made him to be ſin, not only by way of ſuppoſition, but really; he bore the iniquities of many; he took away the ſins of the believer; in all which there is a real act. And, whereas it is objected, that this word *laying* is expreſſed by the phraſe of *imputing*, I anſwer, that it is not true; for, though the word *impute* is often uſed in reference to us, yet never in reference to Chriſt; *Righteouſneſs is imputed to us; our ſins are not imputed unto us*, ſaith the apoſtle; but, in all the ſcripture, you ſhall not find ſin imputed unto Chriſt; and, if ſin be imputed unto him, it is no more

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more but God's determining and judging Chriſt to bear ſin, as in deed and in truth he doth bear it. But I muſt haſten.

I find, beloved, that there is nothing that embitters the life of a poor tender ſoul ſo much as this one thing, that they bear ſtill their own iniquities, which lie heavy upon them; and I think that there cannot be a better ſervice done to the poor weak members of Chriſt, than to ſhew them how they are wholly eaſed of this moſt unſupportable burthen of their ſins. Satan knows, that now there is no other yoke of bondage to keep believers under, than to hold them under this principle, that their ſins are not really already laid upon Chriſt, but that they themſelves muſt bear ſome of them. I know the objections are very many, and, at firſt ſight, ſeem to be very ſtrong; we will ſee how we can take them away.

Natural reaſon, I know, pleads mightily againſt laying iniquity upon Chriſt, taken really and properly.

1. It is againſt juſtice, ſaith reaſon, that Chriſt, being innocent, ſhould be charged with ſin; as unjuſt as if you ſhould take a true honeſt man, and charge him with felony, and execute him for it.

I anſwer, It is no injuſtice to charge iniquity upon Chriſt, though he be innocent, not only becauſe the ſcripture ſaith expreſsly, *That the Lord did lay iniquity upon him*, though he never did violence himſelf, which is enough to ſatisfy any that will be ruled by ſcripture; but, I ſay, in reaſon itſelf, it is not injuſtice, though Chriſt be innocent,

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cent, that yet he ſhould bear iniquity: it is true, if God ſhould take Chriſt, and force him to bear it, whether he would or no, it were injuſtice indeed; but Chriſt willingly offers himſelf to bear it, that God may have ſatisfaction, and a poor creature may have relief; he being thus willing to take it upon himſelf, it is no injuſtice in God to lay it upon him: obſerve it in reaſon, and it is not injuſtice; you have nothing in the world more common than this; ſuppoſe a man oweth an hundred pounds, if the creditor come to another man (ſuppoſe a father) and demand payment, and arreſt him for it, and make him pay it, this is injuſtice indeed; but if a father come to a creditor, and ſay, my ſon is a broken man, he can pay nothing, I am rich and able to pay all, lay your debt upon me, I will undertake it; upon ſuch a tender, is it injuſtice for the creditor now to charge the debt upon the father that thus offers himſelf? There is nothing more common, it is an uſual thing for a man to ſeal bonds for his friend, though the debt be not his own till he hath ſealed, yet then he is as truly the debtor as he that had the money; and ſo when the time of payment comes, the money is demanded of him, and lawfully charged upon him, becauſe he hath made himſelf the debtor: ſo God the Father doth not take Chriſt as a rich man, to pay whether he will or no, but upon a joint agreement between them, Chriſt being contented, God takes him for a ſurety: *In the volume of the book it is written of me,* Heb. x. 7, 9. *that I ſhould do thy will, O God: I*

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am content, ſaith Chriſt, *Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God:* here was, I ſay, a joint agreement; and ſeeing Chriſt agrees to it, where is now the injuſtice, that the *Lord ſhould lay iniquity upon him*, when for his ſatisfaction, Chriſt was contented to do it? The apoſtle tells us, that it was not poſſible that thoſe gifts and ſacrifices that were offered before of the *Jews*, could make thoſe that did the ſervice perfect, in *Heb.* ix. 9. Seeing then there was no other way to ſatisfy God, but Chriſt's own coming, and that he might be ſatified he would come, and freely tender himſelf, there was no injuſtice that he ſhould have *iniquity laid upon him*, when he was content to bear it.

2. It is further objected; ſaith reaſon, it is a contradiction to ſay, Chriſt is innocent, and yet bears iniquity. Innocence is nothing but full freedom from all crime and fault; how can Chriſt be ſaid to be innocent, and yet to have fault upon him? it is a contradiction in reaſon.

I anſwer, it is no contradiction to ſay that Chriſt is innocent, and yet bears fault, being laid upon him: it is true, if theſe propoſitions were affirmed in every reſpect alike, it were a contradiction indeed; but it is commonly known, thoſe things that are in their own nature contradictory, yet if they be ſpoken of in divers reſpects, are not ſo; Chriſt is innocent in reſpect of his own perſonal act; he bears fault as he ſtands a common perſon: Chriſt therefore is conſidered two ways. 1. Perſonally. 2. Repreſentatively, as a common perſon. In reſpect of his own perſon, he is innocent;

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cent; as he is a common perſon, he bears the fault of many.

3. Yet further, iniquity cannot be laid upon Chriſt, ſaith reaſon; for if he ſhould really bear iniquity, he himſelf, for it, muſt be ſeparated from God; and if ſo, how can he make thoſe that were ſometimes afar off, near? The prophet ſaith, *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God;* was Chriſt ſeparated from God, will you ſay? if he were not, how could he bear iniquity.

I anſwer, this objection makes it moſt manifeſt, that Chriſt did really bear iniquity, in that it is the cauſe of ſeparation from God; it is certainly true, wherever iniquity is, it ſeparates; nay, from this I affirm, as Chriſt did bear it, ſo for that he was ſeparated from God; this peradventure will need ſome ſtrong proof, therefore you ſhall have the ſtrongeſt that can be given for the demonſtration of it: that Chriſt was ſeparated from God, it is his own teſtimony, and juſt at that inſtant, when ſin lay heavy upon him; I pray conſtrue well thoſe words of Chriſt, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* What do you call this forſaking here? was it not a ſeparation between God and him? When friends, after they have gone hand in hand together, the one forſakes the other, what is that? he ſeparates himſelf from him. God was here ſeparated from Chriſt, er elſe Chriſt ſpeaks untruth, for he complains and cries out, in the bitterneſs of his ſpirit; *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

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You will ſay, it may be this forſaking was but for a little moment.

To this I anſwer, It was as long as ſin was upon him; had not Chriſt breathed out the ſins of men that were upon him, he had never ſeen God again; he having taken ſin upon him, he muſt firſt unload himſelf of it, before he can be brought near to God: therefore, beloved, you ſhall find that paſſage of the Pſalmiſt, *Thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee*, is expounded by the apoſtle of the reſurrection of Chriſt; as if the Lord did then beget his ſon anew, as it were. There was a ſeparation and a forſaking when Chriſt died, but at his riſing there was a meeting again, a kind of renewing of his ſonſhip with God *, *This day have I begotten thee;* therefore in *Rom.* viii. 34. the apoſtle tells us, *That it is Chriſt that is dead, nay rather that is riſen again, and ſits at the right*

* At the reſurrection of Chriſt there was indeed a freſh declaration of his ſonſhip, his almighty power being exerted in the raiſing himſelf, *Rom.* i. 4. And ſo the begetting of Chriſt as a ſon is applied to his reſurrection, *Acts* xiii. 33. as it may be to any time, act, or inſtance, in which his divine power as the ſon of God is diſplayed; but that there was any redintegration, or renewing of his ſonſhip, or a begetting him anew as a ſon, cannot be ſafely ſaid: Chriſt, indeed, during his ſtate of humiliation was in the form of a ſervant, and ſo was conſidered by his Father, and his divine ſonſhip was little ſeen by men, yea by ſome he was charged with blaſphemy for aſſerting it, and was put to death for it; the reproach of which blaſphemy was wiped off by his reſurrection; but his divine Father always conſidered him as his Son, and more than once, in that ſtate, declared him to be ſo; and Chriſt in his laſt moments commended his Spirit into the hands of God as his Father; wherefore if the Dr's meaning is, as ſome take it, that he was for a time abdicated by his Father, and as it were diſowned as his Son, and upon his reſurrection embraced again as ſuch, I think he muſt be miſtaken.

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hand of God; what doth he infer from thence? Who ſhall therefore lay any thing to his charge? as much as to ſay, 'till Chriſt himſelf came off from men's ſins, they were in danger of being charged with ſin ſtill. It is Chriſt that died, made ſatisfaction; nay rather, that is riſen again, then he comes off; and the coming off of Chriſt himſelf from the ſins he bore, was that which gives diſcharge unto believers, that now nothing can be laid to them; but ſtill *he is riſen*, is as much as to ſay, Chriſt is now come off himſelf, but he was not before he was riſen; and by this he being ſecured from ſin, we are ſecure in him.

Now let us come to ſome application, to ſee how near we can bring this home, to ſatisfy and bring reſt to a weary loaden ſpirit.

The uſe that I ſhall make of this point of God's laying, and the reality of paſſing over iniquity upon Chriſt, and deſire every one of you to make with me, ſhall be this; only to preſs upon you a neceſſary and infallible inference that follows upon it; and that is this, if the Lord hath laid iniquity upon Chriſt, then whoſoever thou art to whom the Lord will be pleaſed to give the believing of this truth, that thine iniquity is laid upon him, that is an abſolute and full diſcharge to thee; ſo that there neither is, nor can be, any for the preſent, or hereafter, laid to thy charge, let the perſon be who he will; if the Lord, I ſay again, give to any to believe this truth, that it is his iniquity he hath laid upon Chriſt, God himſelf cannot charge any one ſin upon him.

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Mark well, I beſeech you, beloved, *Rom.* viii. 33. and ponder it a little, and ſee whether God himſelf can charge iniquity upon any, when once laid upon Chriſt.

He begins with triumph, with a great deal of magnanimity of ſpirit, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* who? may ſome ſay, he againſt whom the elect have tranſgreſſed? No, (ſaith the apoſtle) *It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemn?* I pray mark it a little: underſtand rightly what it is for God to juſtify: to juſtify a perſon, is to diſcharge him from ſuch a fault, or crime, that may be objected againſt him: ſuppoſe a man actually to be arraigned, it may be for twenty bills of indictment; upon the examination of all theſe, peradventure nineteen of them are manifeſtly falſe, the man is clear of all of them; but the twentieth he is found guilty of, and upon examination he is found to be faulty: whether now doth the judge juſtify, or pronounce this perſon juſt, or no, where there is one fault that can be charged upon him? he muſt be clear of every fault before he can be pronounced juſt. When the Lord juſtifies any perſon whatſoever, his juſtification is pronouncing his innocence; if he be criminal, he is not juſt, and if he be juſt, he is not criminal. To ſay that a perſon is juſt, and yet to ſay he is now criminal when he is juſt, is a contradiction; to pronounce a perſon juſt, is to pronounce him wholly innocent and clear from crime. Now then, if to juſtify a perſon, is to pronounce him clear from any crime, where is the

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the iniquity that can be laid to thy charge, being a juſt perſon, as every believer is? doth God now charge any ſin upon thy ſpirit? if he doth, he doth in this pronounce thee an unjuſt perſon; and if he pronounce thee unjuſt, he doth not juſtify thee; for to juſtify, and yet to charge with a fault, is a contradiction: ſo that from the time the Lord juſtifies any perſon, he charges no ſin ever after that upon him; except you will ſay, he once juſtifies men, and then unjuſtifies them again. How many juſtifications muſt we then make in the life of a believer, if ſins committed be charged upon the ſpirit of the man himſelf? As often as ſin is committed anew, there is a revocation of a former juſtification, and a turning of that into an unjuſtification of him again: for though it be generally received, that ſanctification is a ſucceſſive act, that is, God ſanctifies us again and again, more and more; yet, that juſtification is an act of God at once, and the application, or giving of Chriſt to a perſon, is the juſtification of him: a man's juſtification, therefore, being but one act of God, how can it be ſucceſſive? How much leſs can it be revoked, and a juſtified perſon ſtand afterwards unjuſtified? The apoſtle makes it ſo clear, that there can be no queſtion made againſt it; *It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemn?* As much as to ſay, the ſame God that juſtifies, will not paſs ſentence of condemnation upon one that hath received the ſentence of abſolution already. No, you will ſay, God doth not condemn; but

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yet he will let ſin be charged upon the ſpirit of a man; doth not he then ſentence him to be unjuſt?

There be divers condemnations, condemnation in ſentence, and in execution. Condemnation in ſentence, is a pronouncing of ſuch a perſon guilty. You know, it is an ordinary courſe at the trial of a man at the bar, he is condemned when he is pronounced guilty. Now the other condemnation, which is the execution of puniſhment deſerved for guilt, is but the effect of condemnation, rather than that itſelf. So far as God charges fault upon a perſon, ſo far he condemns him; ſo, that if God ſhould charge a man as faulty, how can you believe ſtill that he is pronounced juſt by him?

I beſeech you, beloved, ſtop your ears againſt all theſe quirks of Satan, and of your own deceived hearts by him, clamouring ſtill to you, that ſin lies yet upon you, and upon your own ſpirits. It is but the voice of a lying ſpirit in your own hearts, that ſaith, that you, that are believers, have yet ſin waſting your conſciences, and lying as a burthen too heavy for you to bear *; I ſay, all the

* This is a paſſage that is excepted to, but without juſt cauſe. It is true, indeed, ſin ſometimes lies upon the conſcience of a believer, as a burden too heavy for him to bear, as on *David*, and ſadly waſtes the conſcience, that is, deſtroys the peace of it; but to what is this owing? To unbelief, which is no other than the voice of a lying ſpirit, it gives God the lye, and deceives the hearts of his people, 1 *Joh.* v. 10. *Heb.* iii. 12. it is ſo when it tells believers their ſins are upon themſelves, and muſt be bore by them, though long ago, as the Dr. obſerves, laid on Chriſt with all their weight; and that the wrath of God is upon them, and they ought to ſuffer diſtreſs and anguiſh in their ſouls for them, though their conſciences have been purged by the blood of Chriſt.

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weight, the burthen, the very ſin itſelf, is long ago laid upon Chriſt; and that laying of it upon him, is a full diſcharge and a general acquittance unto thee, that there is not any one ſin now to be charged upon thee. How can theſe two propoſitions ſtand together, thy ſin is laid upon Chriſt, and yet lies upon thee? If God himſelf ſay it lies upon thee, and withal ſays, he before laid it upon Chriſt, how much is this better than a contradiction? But many will be ready to object, and this ſeems to be a very ſtrong one:

Was not *David* a juſtified perſon, and did not he bear his own ſin, though he was juſtified? *My ſins are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavy for me to bear:* and ſo many of God's people make the like complaint; by this it ſeemeth, though a perſon be juſtified, though his ſins be laid upon Chriſt, yet he himſelf bears the weight of them.

I anſwer, I am not ignorant, beloved, that this objection ſeems to ſome to be unanſwerable, and no marvel, till light breaks out of darkneſs to clear the truth.

Firſt, I would fain know, whether now, under the times of the goſpel, there be not many tender-heated religious people, that cry out of their own ſins, and of the weight and burthen of them upon their ſpirits, as well as *David?* I muſt tell you, all that he ſpeaks here, is from himſelf, and all that he ſpake from himſelf was not truth*: take that

* Here a great charge is brought, but without reaſon, every thing that a good man ſays of himſelf, and of the dealings of

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that paſſage of his, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies? and will he be favourable no more? I have waſhed my hands in vain.* Did *David* ſpeak well in theſe paſſages, to charge God that he had forſaken him for ever, and that he will never be gracious more, and I have waſhed my hands in innocency in vain? Did *David* (I ſay) ſpeak well to charge God thus? If a weak believer complain, that makes not every thing a truth he complains of. *David* might miſtake, that God ſhould charge his ſin upon him; and, it may be, he might charge his ſin upon himſelf, without any warrant or commiſſion from God.

But we will go a little further; ſuppoſe we grant *David* did indeed bear the weight of his own tranſgreſſions, and it was according to the will and pleaſure of God, he having ſinned, that he himſelf ſhould bear it; and ſuppoſe we grant, that while he did bear it he was a juſtified perſon, according to the covenant of grace, God made with him; yet it will not follow from hence that

God with him, is not true; he only ſpeaks according to his preſent apprehenſion of things, through a miſguided conſcience, and the power of unbelief, as *David*, *Pſ.* xxxi. 22. And ſo *Aſaph*, whom the Doctor through miſtake calls *David*, and who himſelf acknowledges it was his infirmity to ſay what he did, *Pſ.* lxxvii. 7—10. and lxxiii. 13—15. and as the church, *Iſ.* xl. 27. and xlix. 14, 15, 16. And under a like miſtake *David* ſeems to be in the paſſage under conſideration, *Pſ.* xxxviii. 1—4. for it is plain he thought God was rebuking him in his wrath, and chaſtening him in ſore diſpleaſure, which he deprecates; and what the Dr. after obſerves, that there was ſomething peculiar in his caſe, agreeable to the then diſpenſation of things, which required he ſhould bear his ſins till a ſacrifice was offered, is not to be deſpiſed.

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this inſtance of *David* ſhould be a precedent to believers under the times of the goſpel. I will clear a myſtery unto you, though I have ſpoken elſewhere ſomething of it; and I will clear it from the apoſtle himſelf in the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*; there is a great deal of difference between the times of *David*, and of the goſpel, and that in particular, of a man bearing his own ſin. *David* was under a covenant of grace, and Chriſt was the ſubſtance of it; and ſo he had remiſſion of ſins, but with ſuch a great difference, that the caſe is marvelouſly altered by Chriſt himſelf: it is true, when *David* ſinned there was a ſacrifice for his ſin; and it is as true, that there was no remiſſion to be found, till the performance of it; *And they ſhall bring their ſacrifice to the prieſt, and he ſhall make atonement for them, and their ſins ſhall be forgiven them*, Numb. xv. 28. Here is forgiveneſs of ſins, but they muſt bear their ſins till their ſacrifice was offered; now the ſin of *David* might lie upon himſelf till he had performed his ſacrifice; becauſe there was no remiſſion to be found till that was offered; now it is too probable that *David*, concealing his ſin ſo long as he did, made no great haſte to bring a ſacrifice for it; and till that was offered, there was no remiſſion. Again, ſuppoſe his particular ſacrifice was offered, yet that could not make thoſe that came to it perfect: in *Heb.* x. 6. and ix. 9. ſpeaking of thoſe ſacrifices, the apoſtle ſaith, that they were but a *Figure for the preſent*; and that it was impoſſible that thoſe gifts and ſacrifices ſhould make perfect the comers there-

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thereunto; to wit, they that did the ſervice could not thereby be made perfect: the truth is, though there was ſome remiſſion, and ſo conſequently ſome peace, upon the offering of thoſe ſacrifices, yet ſomething was left behind, for which there was a yearly ſacrifice to take away; even among the people of the *Jews*, under their covenant of grace which they had; which, though it were ſuch a covenant, yet had not the large grants and charters that we have, now Chriſt is come; though they had remiſſion of ſins, yet it was ſucceſſive, and admitted of intermiſſions and ſtops; ſins committed before the ſacrifice was offered, were remitted by it; but no ſins committed after it, had any remiſſion by the former ſacrifice, but muſt ſtay for it till another ſucceeded: and from hence it appears, ſince there was a reiterating of ſin, they had always ſome ſin or other ſtill lying upon their perſons, becauſe there was a ſucceſſive offering up of new ſacrifices. *David* complains of bearing his own ſins; the reaſon is this, all the ſacrifice he could make uſe of could not make his conſcience perfect; as it is plain in *Heb.* ix. 9. *It could not make the comers thereunto perfect:* ſo that though ſin did lie upon *David* till ſuch ſacrifice took them away, yet it doth not follow under the goſpel, ſince Chriſt's coming, that ſin ſhould lie any time upon the ſpirit of a believer in Chriſt. Why ſo, will you ſay? I anſwer, The apoſtle tells us, concerning Chriſt himſelf, that he is *become the mediator of a better teſtament;* wherein better, will you ſay? I anſwer briefly, in this regard, *He is able to ſave*

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to the uttermoſt them that come to God by him; as you have it in *Heb.* vii. 25. mark it, there is the difference; the ſacrifices wherein the remiſſion of ſins was received, *could not make the comers thereto perfect*, but Chriſt being come, *He ſaves to the uttermoſt them that come to God by him:* Look into *Heb.* x. 14. there you ſhall find wherein the main difference lies, *By one ſacrifice*, ſaith the apoſtle, (ſpeaking of Chriſt offering himſelf) *he hath perfected them that are ſanctified:* the difference is this, Chriſt being once come, the ſacrifice of his own body had ſuch a fulneſs of ſatisfaction in it, that there never needed any more to be done to the end of the world, for the taking away of any ſin; but all manner of ſins, of all believers, to the end of the world, were at once taken away by that ſacrifice, and that *for ever.*

So that now a believer is not to wait till a new ſacrifice be performed, that he might be diſcharged from ſuch and ſuch a ſin; but as ſoon as ever he hath committed it, he hath *the Lamb of God* in his eye, *that takes away the ſins of the world;* that hath already taken away this very ſin, at this very inſtant committed. Beloved, conſider well of it, either Chriſt hath taken away all ſin already, or one of theſe two things muſt needs follow; either the believer himſelf is to bear his own ſin, or Chriſt is to come again, and do ſomething more to take away that which remains behind: I ſay, if all ſin be not taken away by what is done already, there muſt be ſomewhat done to take it away; but, ſaith the apoſtle, in *Heb.* x. 26. *There remains*

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remains now no more ſacrifice for ſin. In vain do men now look for ſomething elſe, to come to take away this and that tranſgreſſion; for there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin; that one ſacrifice did all that was ever to be done, and therefore there is no more to follow: if therefore all be done by Chriſt that is to be done, to make *perfect the comers unto him*, and *to ſave them to the uttermoſt*; then all the ſins that believers now commit, or hereafter ſhall commit, nay, all the ſins that all the believers to the end of the world ſhall commit, are already laid upon Chriſt, he hath nailed them to his croſs. Therefore, ſaith the apoſtle, in 1 *John* i. 7. *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his ſon cleanſeth us from all ſin.*

And whereas ſome may be ready to ſay, That this paſſage, that the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all upon him, is not peculiar unto theſe times now, after Chriſt's coming; for it ſeems the prophet *Iſaiah* did proclaim the mind of the Lord in particular, before Chriſt himſelf came in perſon.

To this I anſwer, That all the prophets paſſages concerning the fulneſs of grace to come by Chriſt, though they were ſpoken by them in their time; yet had reference to future times, after Chriſt's coming, and had not reference, in reſpect of their fulneſs, to thoſe times wherein they ſpake: for the clearing of this, I ſhall deſire you to conſult a few words that *Peter* hath, being moſt full and clear to this purpoſe as can be deſired, 1 *Pet.* i. 9, 10, 11. *Receiving the end of your faith, even the ſalvation of your ſouls.* Here he ſpeaks of the perfect fulneſs

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fulneſs that comes by Chriſt, that is, ſalvation; *of which ſalvation the prophets have enquired, and ſearched diligently, who propheſied of the grace that ſhould come unto you, when they teſtified beforehand of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and of the glory that ſhould follow; unto whom*, that is, unto the prophets, *it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us, they did miniſter the things that are now reported unto you by them that preached the goſpel unto you.* The apoſtle ſays plainly, *they diligently ſearched* into the times wherein thoſe things they then propheſied of ſhould come to paſs; and that they did not preach them to themſelves, and that they did not adminiſter theſe things unto themſelves, but to us; I ſay, therefore, ſtill Chriſt was the foundation of the covenant they had, and remiſſion of ſins was a fruit of it; but their covenant took not all their ſins away; ſome were upon them for the time, which was the cauſe of their complaint: but Chriſt now hath taken all our ſins away, that we are become incomparably perfect; and not only perfect in reſpect of ſin to be charged on us, being paſſed from us upon Chriſt, but alſo our very conſciences are acquitted: for, ſaith the apoſtle, ſpeaking of the conſciences of God's people under the goſpel, in reſpect of the full diſcharge from ſin, in *Heb.* x. 22. *Therefore* (having ſpoken ſo largely of the remiſſion of ſins, upon which there remains no more ſacrifice) *we may come with boldneſs to the throne of grace with a true heart, and full aſſurance of faith.* Upon what ground? Having our hearts purged or ſprinkled from an evil conſcience.

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O let not therefore, beloved, I beſeech you, any objection or objectors in the world, take you off from ſtanding faſt in that liberty wherein Chriſt hath made you free, and do not again entangle yourſelves with ſuch yokes of bondage, that neither you nor your fathers were able to bear.

If the ceremonies of the *Jews* were ſo weighty, and ſuch yokes of bondage, what are the ſins of people lying upon them? Beloved, you may ſearch and enquire into many ways to find reſt to your ſouls while they are diſquieted; but if your hearts are rightly enlightened, and really tender, all the ways in the world ſhall never give reſt to the ſole of your foot, nor the leaſt comfort to your ſpirits, till you find reſt upon this one principle, that the Lord hath diſcharged all your ſins, and will remember no one ſin againſt you; till, I ſay, you can behold a general releaſe, all the whole ſcore croſſed, and God diſcharging you from every filthineſs, there can be no reſt to your ſpirits. Is there one ſin upon you? that one ſin will prove ſo heavy a preſſure on you, that you ſhall never be able to endure it, eſpecially when the Lord ſhall let you ſee what the fearful weight of any one ſin is; but if you can receive this principle, that every ſin you have committed, or ſhall commit, is caſt upon the Lord Chriſt, and carried away; that you ſhall never hear again of any of them, in regard of accuſation from God, or in regard of juſt accuſation from your own ſpirits, then ſhall your ſouls return to their reſt: but if you be not fully ſettled upon this principle, that the

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the Lord hath ſo taken away every ſin of every believer, that there is not any one remaining, nor any one ſhall remain for God to charge upon you, you can have none. Give me leave to bring in a few paſſages of ſcripture, that will be ſo evident, that except perſons will wilfully reſiſt the truth, they cannot but ſit down with this reſolution of ſpirit, that all their ſins are manifeſtly taken from them, and they perfectly diſcharged of them. In *Pſalm* li. 7. *David* complains, and makes his addreſs to God, *Waſh me*, ſaith he, and what is the fruit of God's waſhing? *Waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.* That God, when he firſt enters into covenant with perſons, waſhes them, is as clear as the light: mark that in *Ezek.* xvi. 8, 9, 10. *When I paſſed by thee, I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine; then waſhed I thee with water:* I ſay, when God enters into covenant with his people, he waſhes them; and, how doth he waſh them? Doth he leave ſome ſpots, blemiſhes, and ſtains behind? No: *Waſh me*, ſaith he, *and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.* What blots can you find upon ſnow itſelf? there is nothing clearer than ſnow; yet, ſaith the prophet, *I ſhall be whiter than ſnow.*

Look into *Cant.* iv. 7. ſee what an abſolute diſcharge there is to every one that is a member of Chriſt, and that is a preſent one too; it is not for hereafter; *Thou art all fair my love, there is no ſpot in thee:* it is not, thou ſhalt be all fair, or have no ſpot in thee; but thou art even now ſo; ſo ſoon as thou art my ſpouſe, thou art fair: nay,

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thou art all fair; nay, *there is not any one ſpot in thee:* is this the voice of Chriſt, or not? Look into *Iſa.* xliii. 25. you ſhall ſee what a full diſcharge is given, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own name's ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.*

Beloved, ſuppoſe a perſon before a judge be arraigned for felony, and he that accuſes him appeals to the judge himſelf, ſaying, Dot not you know that this man committed ſuch a thing? The judge ſaith, I remember no ſuch thing; now if no other evidence comes in, is not the judge's not remembring any ſuch thing, a ſufficient diſcharge for him? The Lord ſaith, *I will not remember their ſins;* how then can he charge them upon them, when he will not remember them? Shall I come and witneſs againſt a man, and ſay, he did ſteal, and is guilty of theft, and yet I never remember it? The Lord doth not remember, therefore he doth not charge: nay, ſaith he, *I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions:* now what is it to blot out a thing? Suppoſe there be a deed, or a bond, wherein a debt is chargeable upon a man, and every line and letter of it are blotted out; how can it be charged upon him, eſpecially when the creditor himſelf hath blotted it out? where can this be charged? *I, even I, am he* (ſaith the Lord) *that blotteth out:* if any other beſides the creditor ſhould blot out a debt, there were ſome cauſe left of fear; but if the creditor himſelf ſhall do it, what need the debtor make any queſtion of it? So if any creature in the world ſhould undertake to blot

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blot out sin but God, this might not hold good; but, when he himself comes and blots it out, where is any charge that can be laid upon him? he cannot recall his own act again.

In *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. you shall see what a full discharge is given to believers: *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put into you:* mark, what is that the Lord cleanses from? *All filthiness:* even then, when he enters into covenant, gives a new heart, becomes the God of a people, then he sprinkles with clean water, and they are clean from all their filthiness.

Look into *Daniel* ix. 23, 24. you shall find, that the Lord whispers a secret in the ears of *Daniel*, which he would make him know was a fruit of the greatness of his love unto him; *I am come to shew thee, for thou art greatly beloved, therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision,* or mystery: what is that secret that God will impart unto him, as the greatest expression of his love? it is this; *Yet seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city;* and what is it that follows upon these seventy weeks? (Mark the words I pray) *To finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.* Neither transgression, nor sin, were finished, nor iniquity come to an end, nor everlasting righteousness brought in, until the seventy weeks were ended; but upon the determination of them, then came sin

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ſin to be finiſhed. Mark the words well, iniquity then came to an end, and then came in everlaſting righteouſneſs. And Chriſt ſeems to touch upon this very prophecy, when it was accompliſhed upon the croſs, *It is finiſhed*, ſaith he: what is the meaning? what is finiſhed? ſin is finiſhed; for the ſpeech hath reference unto the prophecy of *Daniel*; not that his ſuffering, but ſin was finiſhed; for he lay in the grave till the third day afterward, and was under death, but ſin was finiſhed according to that prophecy: now the ſeventy weeks being fulfilled, what tranſgreſſions can you have upon your conſciences? wherefore do you complain ſo much of the burthen of them, ſeeing that ſin is finiſhed? If thy preſent tranſgreſſions be not finiſhed, at the ſeventy weeks end, by that ſuffering of his, there is no truth in that of *Daniel*, ſin is finiſhed; a thing is not finiſhed, when there remains any thing to be done about it; if there remains ſome ſins to be taken away, then ſin is not finiſhed; but at the end of ſeventy weeks, ſin was finiſhed by Chriſt, and came to an end.

I could inſtance in many other paſſages of ſcripture; it were infinite to name them all; and ſuch they are, as are more worth, and more glorious, than all the treaſures of the world. Any one of all theſe is a general diſcharge to every believer in the world.

But you will ſay, do not believers commit ſin now?

I anſwer,

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I anſwer, They commit tranſgreſſion, but long before they did it, it was paid for, and taken away; all the ſcore is croſſed, even from the time that Chriſt bore the ſins of many upon the croſs.

It is true, the Lord leaves the ſins that believers act, legible ſtill, though croſſed: as when a man hath croſſed his book, one may read every particular ſum, or debt, that was formerly written; and though he may read them, yet it doth not follow that they are debts, for the croſſing of it takes away the nature of the debt: God croſſed the ſcore when Chriſt died, and then it was no more debt; all our ſins, as a debt, were then finiſhed; only God will leave that, which was before a debt, fairly written ſtill, that we may read them, and ſee how many there are, and what great ſums they amount unto; that ſo we might have hereby the clearer occaſion, diligently to ſet forth the praiſe of the glory of that grace, that hath croſſed ſuch a ſcore.

But ſome will be ready to ſay, yet once more, this kind of doctrine opens a wide gap to all manner of licentiouſneſs. Licentiouſneſs! how ſo? You will ſay, if a perſon know, before he hath committed his ſin, that whatſoever he ſhall commit afterwards, are already laid upon Chriſt, and there is no fear he ſhall receive any damage by them; who will not break out into all manner of ſins, that are ſo pleaſing to men's corrupt natures, when they know they can have no hurt by them.

1. I anſwer, Did not the Lord himſelf know what corrupt inferences men would draw from grace

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grace revealed, and made to appear? Is it dangerous to preach the free grace of God, leſt men ſhould draw licentious inferences from it?

Where was the wiſdom of God, that could not conceal theſe truths, that are ſo dangerous to be publiſhed? Did the Lord, and was he pleaſed, whatever danger might follow, to reveal the truth ſo graciouſly, and ſhall we ſay, we muſt mince it, or depreſs it, becauſe ſome abuſe it, and corrupt inferences are made of it?

2. I anſwer, If it be truth the Lord hath revealed, that we may, and ſhould publiſh it abroad unto men; then we muſt preach it, let the conſequences be what they will.

But I anſwer further, there is no ſuch danger from thoſe to whom this free grace is given, that they ſhould make ſuch corrupt inferences: I do not deny, beloved, but that ſuch as are rejected and given up of God, may make licentious uſes of the doctrines of grace, and the fulneſs of pardon by Chriſt; but, who ever ſaid, that this fulneſs of grace, or any part of it, belongs to ſuch that are rejected? Do not we ſay, that believers are the only perſons on whom the Lord confers it, and to whom he gives to receive it? Not that believing, in the act of it, is the efficient, or confirmation, but the manifeſtation of it to them, that it belongs to them: as for others that are not believers, we do not ſay their part is in it; it may be in it, though they be not now believers; yet we cannot for the preſent ſay they have their part in it, 'till they believe: though they do not now believe, they

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they may afterwards; and whenever they do, that which before was hid, appears by believing.

I draw to an end: I ſay again, for believers, that the revelation of the fulneſs of grace, and acquittance from ſin, are ſo far from opening a gap unto licentiouſneſs of life; that the truth is, there is nothing in the world that raiſes up ſuch a glorious ſanctified life, as to know the full deliverance of the ſoul from ſin: mark but what *Zachariah* ſaith, in *Luke* i. 74, 75. *That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs.* It imports thus much unto us, that the ſerving of God, without fear, is the fruit of a ſaint's deliverance from his enemies, from ſin: the more we believe that ſin is already paſſed and carried away, the more ſhall we ſerve him without fear; therefore, *Solomon* ſpeaks excellently, *The righteous are bold as a lion;* thoſe that are once ſure, in reſpect of God and their own ſouls, adventure upon any thing he calls them out unto; miſcarry, or not miſcarry, it is all one with them, for all ſtands right between God and them. While men know not whether their ſins are paſſed away, and themſelves diſcharged, and that there is no danger in reſpect of them, how many duties that God calls them to, do they baulk? and how many ſufferings, for the cauſe of God, are they ready to ſhrink from, before they have the aſſurance of the pardon of their ſins? The apoſtle tells us, *That the grace of God,* his loving-kindneſs and favour, *that brings ſalvation, hath appeared;* what is the

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fruit? Are we ſaved by grace? Then may we live as we liſt, may ſome ſay? No; *this grace, that brings ſalvation, teaches us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts; and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* However others may turn the grace of God into wantonneſs, yet believers, who have received this mercy, and aſſurance thereof, to have all their ſins caſt upon Chriſt, cannot ſin in this kind; and why not? *They are born of God,* (ſaith St. *John*) *and they cannot ſin, becauſe the ſeed of God abides in them;* or as the apoſtle expreſſeth it more fully thus, *We are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto ſalvation,* 1 Pet. i. 5. It is moſt certainly true, indeed, corrupt nature, having no bridle to reſtrain it from ſin, but only the ſour ſauce that follows, take away that, corrupt nature will break out. But, beloved, take the believer ſaved by grace, and delivered from all his ſins, he hath another principle over-ruling in his ſpirit, and that is the ſeed of God in him; and this ſo over-rules him, that he hath not that maw (as we uſe to ſay) as he had when corrupt nature had power over him.

But, you will ſay, then is this ground of preſumption; now many thouſands will run into it, upon this doctrine delivered?

I anſwer, Underſtand preſumption well; conſider what it is, and then you ſhall ſee how vain the objection is. What is it? It is no more but this, promiſing to myſelf any great thing without any good ground: if I promiſe myſelf, ſuch a man will give me an hundred pounds, and he never ſaid

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ſaid ſo, and I have no ground to think ſo, this is preſumption; but, if a man engages himſelf to give me ſo much, is it preſumption in me to expect it, though I pay nothing for it? So, here, if ſo be that the diſcharge from all ſin at once, were without any ground, it were preſumption to build upon it; but if the Lord hath, as you have heard, publiſhed all this to the world, of his grace to his own people, what preſumption is it to build upon ſo ſure a foundation as the word of grace? God himſelf muſt change before this bottom, whereupon the foot of a believer ſtands, ſhall ſink.

But, you will ſay, though there be this free grace, and full diſcharge of ſin, Chriſt taking ſin upon himſelf; yet it doth not belong to licentious perſons, therefore it ſhould not be publiſhed ſo generally as men preach it.

I anſwer, Who is it for? Is it for the righteous, or for the wicked? *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, ſaith our Saviour; that is, to turn and come to me. It is not for *the whole, they need not the phyſician, but the ſick.* In brief, beloved, mark but the tenor of the goſpel, and you ſhall ſee who they are to whom the free grace of God is tendered; *If, while we were enemies*, (ſaith *Paul*) *Chriſt died for us, how much more ſhall we be ſaved by his life?* Now I will aſk, whether is the free grace of God delivered to the enemies of Chriſt, conſidered as ſuch, or no? *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſware unto thee, and I ſpread my ſkirt over thee, and entered*

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tered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine, and all this in blood, *Then waſhed I thee with water;* when? after he had ſworn, and entered into covenant, and ſpread his ſkirt over them. To whom, beloved, doth this entrance into the free covenant belong? Why, to perſons in their blood before their waſhing; for waſhing follows entering into covenant: *In due time*, ſaith the apoſtle, *Chriſt died for the ungodly:* and, in *Rom.* iv. 5. it is expreſſed thus; *Now to him that worketh not, but to him that believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed to him for righteouſneſs.* It is the ungodly that God juſtifieth, and who is he? the ungodly that doth not work: *Not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy.* Now, then, to whom ſhould we preach the free grace of God, and diſcharge from all ſin, but to thoſe to whom the Lord himſelf reaches it out? But you will ſay, doth it belong to all? I anſwer, it belongeth not to all, but to every ungodly man under heaven, to whom God will give to believe and receive this truth; *He came to his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the ſons of God, even to as many as believed in his name.* The truth is, it is a ſecret in the boſom of the Lord himſelf, to whom the grace belongs; *And ſecret things belong unto God, but things revealed belong to us and our children;* wherefore we are to publiſh it to particular perſons; and to every one to whom the Lord gives to believe, this grace belongs;

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belongs; for, when he believes * it, it is manifeſt to him, that his full portion is in it, let his converſation be what it will before.

I ſpeak not this to bolſter any man in any way of wickedneſs; for when the Lord gives faith, he will certainly change the heart, and that will work by love: this, I ſay, that when God is pleaſed to make a perſon ſo to ſee his own ſin and emptineſs, as to reach after the grace of God in Chriſt, there is not a ſoul that believes in Chriſt, and reaches after him, that poſſibly can miſcarry; *Him that comes to me, I will not caſt off;* no one that believeth. There is not one ſoul under heaven, but if the Lord gives him to come, and receive this grace, and not reject it, (let his ſins be what they will) there is a preſent participation; nay more, there is a preſent manifeſtation to him in ſpecial, that all the grace of the goſpel is his. And ſo much for this time.

[* Heb. xi. 1.——Rom. v. 2.]

SERMON

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SERMON XX.

To lay our Sins on Chriſt, is the Lord's Prerogative only.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I HAVE made entrance formerly in ſome other place (as ſome here preſent peradventure know) upon the words that I have now read unto you. The whole myſtery of the goſpel, in the excellency of it, is ſummed up in them, and in what goes immediately before; even thoſe excellencies which though the prophets ſpake of before, yet it was revealed unto them, *That not unto themſelves, but unto us theſe things were particularly intended,* concerning this glorious goſpel; the whole completeneſs of the people of God, from the firſt riſe of it to the conſummation of it, with all the ſteps and degrees to it, is compriſed in this text. And leſt any ſhould boaſt of himſelf when he ſhall partake of the glory of this grace, the

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the Lord is pleaſed to lay down a caveat in the beginning of it, *All we, like ſheep, have gone aſtray, we have turned every man to his own way:* this is the beſt we are, and in this condition the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; that ſo all the world may know, even the beſt of men, that not for their own righteouſneſs, doth the Lord do this to them, or for them.

But I muſt not dwell upon particulars, which I have formerly delivered upon this ſubject. I will lead you by the hand, and point out what I have paſſed through, that ſo we may make a more orderly progreſs. Every word in this text hath ſo much weight in it, that each word contains a great latitude and immenſeneſs in it of the grace of God to us.

1. It is iniquity itſelf that the Lord hath laid upon Chriſt; not only our puniſhment, but our very ſin.

2. And that this tranſaction of our ſins to Chriſt, is a real act; our ſins ſo became Chriſt's, that he ſtood the ſinner in our ſtead, and we diſcharged.

3. That which remains yet to be conſidered, is another branch, ſhooting out of this tree of life, for ſo I may call this text; and that is drawn from the efficient of this great grace of laying our iniquities upon Chriſt; it is the Lord himſelf that is the agent; he himſelf hath done this thing; *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* As Satan hath caſt a miſt over other glorious branches of the goſpel, ſo he hath endeavoured to caſt very

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very darkneſs itſelf over this truth, namely, *That this is the Lord's own act.* It is true, Satan is contented to allow men general and groſs notions of it, that our iniquities are diſpoſed of by the Lord; but when there ſhall be a thorough ſearching into particulars concerning this truth, then he beſtirs* himſelf, even to raiſe contradictions againſt what men, in general, will grant. The truth is, beloved, it is hardly received of men, and very rare it is, to let the Lord himſelf be the ſole and only agent, in laying our iniquity upon Chriſt; and yet if it were not he alone that did it, all the creatures in the world would break their backs with heaving at iniquity to lay it upon him. And aſſuredly, beloved, let any man take any other courſe in the world, putting the work of laying iniquity upon any other, but the Lord alone, he ſhall never effect it, he ſhall never lay it upon Chriſt: the point therefore that I ſhall deliver, is briefly this.

It is the Lord, it is he ſingly, he excluſively, he only and alone, and none but he, that layeth iniquity upon Chriſt.

There is nothing in the world can do this but the Lord. Nay, I will go further. There is nothing in the world moves, perſuades, or prevails with him, to lay our iniquity upon Chriſt: the Lord is ſo alone the founder, and author, or agent in this work, that he is moved and ſtirred up only by himſelf to do it; and nothing in the world moves him to do it but himſelf.

[John viii. 44.]

For

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For the clearing of this truth, give me leave to dive a little into it, and I ſhall only deſire this juſtice at your hands, that the manifeſtation and evidence of ſcripture, may carry your judgments without prejudice; I ſay, for the clearing of it, I ſhall dive into theſe particulars.

The Lord is ſo the ſole agent, in laying our iniquities upon Chriſt, that even Chriſt himſelf doth not lay them upon himſelf; nay, I muſt go yet further, the Lord himſelf doth ſo, of and from himſelf, without regard to any motive whereby he might be perſuaded to lay our iniquities upon Chriſt; that Chriſt himſelf is not the firſt motive to the Lord to do this thing: I ſay again, Chriſt is not the mover, or perſuader of the Lord unto it; but the Lord merely from himſelf ſimply, as he is the Lord God, moved and prevailed with himſelf alone to lay our iniquities upon him. And, yet, beloved, this will be no derogation to Chriſt at all, but will only conſtitute him in his own true and proper office as he is the mediator; for according to that office we ſpeak of him here. I ſay, It is not Chriſt himſelf that lays our iniquities upon himſelf: it is true, Chriſt doth many admirable things about iniquity, being laid upon him; *He takes away the ſins of the world; he bears the ſins of many; he is made ſin for us;* but you ſhall no where find, that Chriſt laid upon himſelf the ſins of man: he himſelf was as careful that his Father ſhould not be robbed of his own glory, as that his people may be ſaved by his righteouſneſs; all along you ſhall ſtill find that Chriſt

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Chriſt is ſo far from making this taking of iniquity his own original act, that he ſtill acknowledges, that bearing it was not only for the pleaſure of his Father, but alſo in ſubjection unto him, and in obedience to his command: obſerve but that expreſſion of Chriſt himſelf, in *Heb.* x. 5. 6. you ſhall plainly perceive, that Chriſt doth not lay iniquity upon himſelf, but according to the charge of his Father, he is contented to take what he layeth upon him; *In burnt offerings and ſacrifices for ſin, thou haſt no pleaſure; then ſaid I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God: thy law is written in my heart,* ſaith Chriſt there, *A body haſt thou prepared for me,* thou haſt fitted a body for me, *thou haſt bored mine ears,* &c. Out of theſe expreſſions I will obſerve this to you: 1. That the main diſcourſe of Chriſt here, hath reference to the taking away of the ſins of men; for, in the beginning of the chapter, you ſhall find how the apoſtle hath diſtinguiſhed between the weakneſs of the *Jewiſh* rites concerning remiſſion of ſins, and the efficacy of Chriſt's ſacrifice for the perfecting of it. In theſe ſervices there was a remembrance of ſin every year; *Becauſe it was impoſſible that the blood of bulls and goats ſhould take away ſin.* For this cauſe Chriſt comes into the world. To what purpoſe? To do that which thoſe ſacrifices could not do, to take away ſin perfectly: but by what authority came Chriſt? Doth he come of his own head? Doth he of himſelf take the ſin upon himſelf? No, beloved, he doth not; *In the volume*

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volume of the book (ſaith Chriſt) *it is written of me*, or as it is in the original, *in the head of the book it is written of me*; As if he had ſaid, in thy book it is written, as a chief head or matter; remiſſion of ſins is aſcribed unto me as a buſineſs committed unto me, or paſſed over to me.

But it may be by way of courteſy, ſome may ſay.

I anſwer, Mark well the meaning of that place, Chriſt ſaith, *Thy law is in my heart*; ſo then it ſeems this book which contains this buſineſs of Chriſt, about the remiſſion of ſins, is a book that runs in the ſtrain of a law upon him, or unto him; ſo that in the buſineſs of bearing the ſins of men, Chriſt was ſo far from taking it upon himſelf, to lay their iniquities upon himſelf, that he acknowledges he was under a law in this thing; nay, *Secondly*, See that it was the Lord's own buſineſs that Chriſt is ſent about; for he tells us expreſsly, that the Lord every way furniſhes him to this work: *A body haſt thou prepared me*, or fitted for me; and all to ſhew that Chriſt is in a manner paſſive about the buſineſs of taking off iniquity; he doth not take it upon himſelf, but only bears it, being laid on by the commiſſion, nay the hand of God himſelf. And therefore, in *Heb.* v. 9. the apoſtle tells us expreſly, That *though Chriſt were a Son, yet learned he obedience*: and in *John* x. 18. Chriſt ſaith, *I have power to lay down my life, and to take it up again, and no man can take it away from me*; in which he may ſeem to be his own mover, and that he doth it of himſelf

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ſelf to bear the ſins of men; yet afterwards he ſhews plainly, that he ſpeaks this not at all in reference to his father, but in reference to the creature; no man takes it away from him indeed, but in reſpect of them he lays it down himſelf; but in reference to the Father, he ſaith, *This commandment have I received from my father, that I ſhould lay down my life.* That no man ſhould take away my life, that is true indeed, but that I ſhould lay it down: and in *John* xv. 10. our Saviour calls out his diſciples upon a ſervice of the Lord, from an argument of his own obedience; *As I have kept my Father's commandment, and abide in his love, ſo if you keep my commandment, ye ſhall abide in my love.* By all which expreſſions you may perceive, that Chriſt, as he ſtands the mediator and bearer of the ſins of men, ſtands as one looking ſtill for his commiſſion, when the Lord himſelf will lay their iniquities on him; he doth not of himſelf, and of his own accord, lay them on himſelf; and therefore the apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſaith expreſsly, *No man taketh this office upon himſelf, but he that is called of God, as* Aaron *was.* What office was that? The office of the prieſthood to bear the ſins of men; and he ſpeaks of Chriſt himſelf in this place, that he did not take this upon himſelf; but waited till the Lord was pleaſed to lay the load upon him, and then he laid his ſhoulders under it: it is true, God's laying iniquity upon Chriſt was not by compulſion; but there was a voluntary agreement; it was the agreement of a ſon to a father, that keeps his authority and power

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er in this buſineſs; Chriſt is but the mediator; he comes between as he is choſen the umpire.

But if any ſhall ſay, Though Chriſt doth not lay the iniquities of men upon himſelf, yet ſurely he moves and perſuades the Father to lay them upon him.

I anſwer, This is received for a general truth, that what the Lord doth about the diſcharge of a believer's ſin, he doth all upon the motives Chriſt put him upon, by that prevalency that he hath with him; but, beloved, you ſhall find this, that in all Chriſt's diſcourſe, he very frequently puts off many things from himſelf, and gives them to his father; and therefore he faith expreſsly, *That of himſelf he doth nothing, but as he hears ſo he ſpeaks.* It is true, that the Lord hath given to Chriſt the pre-eminence in all things, as he by whom alone he works all good in the world to the ſons of men; but he hath not given Chriſt this pre-eminence, to be the firſt mover of him to do that good to men that he doth: the Lord himſelf is the fountain of his own motives, and is moved ſimply, and only from himſelf, to do that good that he doth to the ſons of men. And that it may appear plainly to you, that Chriſt was not the firſt mover of the Father to diſpoſe of the ſins of men upon himſelf, obſerve but this one thing, what was the motive that Chriſt himſelf ſhould have ſuch a being as he had, to wit, of mediator-ſhip? Was not Chriſt himſelf given unto the world to be the Saviour of men? How could he be a motive to the Father to give him a being to move

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move him, before he himself had a being to move withal? There must therefore be a love boiling in the Father to the sons of men, that must stir him up to give Christ to be their Saviour, or else he could not have come into the world. If therefore the love of God to men, was the first mover of himself to give Christ to them, how could he be the mover of the Father, that he should be given to them, since it was the good pleasure of the Father that Christ should be? It is true, *indeed*, Christ is the mover of the Father to execute all the good pleasure of his to the sons of men; but he is not the mover of him first to love them; the thoughts of God were from himself towards men. Now, because that *mercy and truth might meet together, and righteousness and peace might kiss each other*, which only Christ could compass, therefore was he sent of God into the world, to make up whatsoever might conduce to the accomplishment of his love. When God first cast his love upon men, and saw their transgressions must be satisfied for, that justice might not be violated, that mercy might not swallow up justice, nor justice might not trample upon, nor devour mercy; therefore there must be satisfaction made, that justice might have its own right: for this cause Christ was sent into the world as a *medium*, or means, whereby the love that God had formerly set upon the sons of men, might have its free course without interruption.

Peradventure, beloved, this discourse may seem somewhat vain and impertinent, that God himself should

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ſhould be his own mover to lay the iniquities of the ſons of men upon the body of Chriſt; but now by that which follows you ſhall ſee, that it is of great concern; for if Chriſt himſelf did not lay our iniquities upon himſelf, and if he did not move the Father primarily to lay them upon him, how much leſs could we, and any thing we could do, attain to that height to lay them upon him? I know that all will be ready to grant, that Chriſt is greater with the Father than all the things in the world; and if any thing were able to move him to lay the iniquities of men upon Chriſt, he were able to do moſt in this matter; if then Chriſt himſelf doth not lay our iniquities upon himſelf, all that we can do, or are, cannot poſſibly do it.

There is a great miſtake (and I ſuppoſe it is out of ignorance, for lack of diving into the bottom of the goſpel) among men, I mean, among tender-hearted godly people, thoſe that are deeply wrought upon; and a conceit it is that is deeply rooted in their ſpirits, that ſome performances of their own muſt lay their iniquities upon Chriſt. Suppoſe there be a ſin committed, it may be more ſcandalous than ordinary, which peradventure to ſenſe wounds the ſpirit; the queſtion now is, what it is that muſt, or doth, rid ſuch a one of the ſting and guilt of this or ſuch like tranſgreſſions committed? What diſcharges the ſoul of ſuch a ſin? Uſually it is taught among us, by thoſe who would be accounted the greateſt proteſtants, and haters of popery, that the proportion of repentance, tears, ſorrow, and faſtings, anſwerable

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ſwerable to the latitude and height of ſuch tranſgreſſions, is that that gives eaſe; this takes away the burthen, this lays the ſoul at reſt and quiets it: therefore when a ſoul hath tranſgreſſed, if it be tender, moſt, or almoſt, all the pantings of it, are after extraordinary enlargements in bitterneſs, heavineſs, mourning, melting, and tears; theſe are accounted they that waſh away iniquity: but, beloved, let me tell you, it is impoſſible that all the righteouſneſs of men though it were more perfect than it can be, ſhould lay one iniquity, or the leaſt circumſtance of one, upon Chriſt. If a man could weep his heart out, if it could melt like wax, diſſolve into water, and guſh out rivers of tears for ſin; all this could not carry away the leaſt dram of the filthineſs of ſin from ſuch a ſoul unto Chriſt, nor unload the ſoul of any ſin to load him with it: therefore they do but deceive themſelves, that aſcribe the unloading and eaſing of their own ſpirits, to the greateſt enlargements in any performances in the world; Chriſt himſelf did not lay iniquity upon himſelf, much leſs can the righteouſneſs of any man lay it upon him. Look upon the beſt of your righteouſneſs, ſuppoſe the things mentioned already; ſuppoſe a ſpiritualneſs in all that righteouſneſs, what can they do towards this, namely, unloading a man's own ſpirit of his ſin, and the loading of Chriſt with it? Suppoſe the righteouſneſs you perform were perfect and complete, that God himſelf could find no fault with it after any ſin is committed; make the largeſt ſuppoſition that can be imagined; when all

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all this is done, what can all this conduce to the taking away of ſin already committed? Do you not owe all this righteouſneſs to God, as you are under his command? And if you owe it, then the very payment of it is but the payment of his own debt; and how can the payment of this debt diſcharge for a former debt? Suppoſe a man oweth two hundred pounds, to be paid each at ſix months, at two payments; if he fails in the payment of the firſt, and at the ſecond day of payment pays one of the hundred pounds, every penny of it, doth this balance the account? doth the payment of the laſt hundred pounds ſatisfy the whole debt? If he had paid the firſt and ſecond hundred pounds, he had paid but what was due; can the ſecond payment then be any ſatisfaction and furtherance to payment of the former debt? No, not at all. In whatever we have ſinned, we have failed in the payment of that which was God's due; and when we come to perform any righteouſneſs, that is his due too: if we had not failed in the former, this latter is God's due too, this muſt have been paid; and when we perform any righteouſneſs after ſins committed, ſuppoſe it were perfect and complete, this doth but ſatisfy its own debt, for God requires all this: and if it do but ſatisfy its own debt, how can it diſcharge a former?

Beſides, beloved, how is it poſſible any righteouſneſs of man can lay iniquity upon Chriſt, when beſides what we have already ſaid, there is new iniquity contracted againſt the Lord in all the

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righteouſneſs that men perform? This is an odd payment of debts, by payment ſtill to run more and more in debt; that our righteouſneſs may acquit us of former tranſgreſſions, and yet that itſelf contracts new tranſgreſſion to men, making it more than it was before; how can any man in ordinary ſenſe conceive this to be any way of diſcharge.

But ſome will ſay, Though our performances do not lay our iniquities upon Chriſt, yet they prevail with God, and move him with pity towards us, and ſtir him up to take our iniquities off from us, and lay them upon Chriſt: God cannot but melt, will ſome ſay, to ſee the tears of his people, the bitterneſs of their ſpirits, their crying, their earneſtneſs, and their ſorrows; theſe cannot but prevail with him to have compaſſion on them.

I know this is the general conceit of too many in the world: but, beloved, let me tell you, there is nothing in all creatures in the world that hath the leaſt prevalency with the Lord, let them do what they can. All our prayers, tears, faſtings, mournings, reluctancy, and fighting againſt our corruptions, move God not a jot to lay our ſins upon Chriſt; he is moved only from himſelf. If they move God, what muſt they move him to? If he be moved by any thing from man, he is moved according to the nature of the thing that is done; if the nature of the thing produce evil effects, God muſt be moved to do evil to men; if good effects, if there be good in the things, they may

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may move him to good: now I aſk, is there good or evil in any thing men do? when they have ſinned, they pray, confeſs, mourn, and faſt; is there evil or good in theſe, looked upon in their own nature? No man can deny, but that there is abundance of iniquity in the beſt performances a man doth; and *God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.* That which muſt move God to do good, muſt have a goodneſs in itſelf; all the motive, therefore, in the Lord is ſimply himſelf.

And that it may appear manifeſtly unto us, that the Lord doth not fetch motives from us, to lay our iniquities upon Chriſt, you ſhall find through the whole current of the goſpel, he takes a time of laying them upon him, when all the world may ſee there is no poſſibility that any creature ſhould move him to do it. Mark well, *Rom.* ix. 11. *The children being yet unborn, before they had done good or evil, it was ſaid,* Jacob *have I loved, and* Eſau *have I hated.* Before *Jacob* had done either good or evil, God's love was faſtened upon him, to ſhew that evil did not move him to reject, nor good perſuade him to love: while *Jacob* was in the womb God loved him, and what in him did move him to love him? he was conceived and born in ſin, as *David* confeſſeth of himſelf. What ſhould move God to love *Jacob,* and to put away his tranſgreſſion? *That it might be according to the purpoſe of election, not of him that worketh, but of God that ſheweth mercy. When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood,* Ezek. xvi. 8. *I ſpread my ſkirt over thee, and entered into covenant with*

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thee, and thou becamest mine. Israel being now in blood, what was in him to persuade God to swear to him, and to enter into covenant with him? By [*blood*] he means the filthiness in the creature, and such that no eye could pity it when God first set his love upon it. *If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;* mark the expression; there was no distance between *being enemies* and *reconciliation;* there was reconciliation even while enemies. What motive is there in an enemy, while such, to persuade reconciliation? *In due time Christ died for the ungodly,* saith the text. What motive can an ungodly man use to persuade God to lay iniquity upon Christ, I say, considering him as ungodly?

But you will say, this is a way, and a high-way, to destroy all performances whatsoever. What, can they do nothing? to what purpose should any man then fall upon any employment?

Beloved, I am not ignorant how the apostle *Paul* himself was slandered, when he preached the free grace of God, simply out of his own bowels, without any motive from the creature, as if he allowed and maintained continuance in sin, and breaking out into all manner of licentiousness, because grace abounded. I believe it hath been a charge upon the ministers of the gospel, ever since his time. Oh, if ministers preach the free grace of God, and that what he doth, he doth for his own sake, then farewel all obedience and performances; this opens a gap for all manner of idleness! Be not deceived, the Lord hath many special

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ſpecial ends, for which he hath ſet up a courſe of uprightneſs of converſation in the world, though there be no ſtroke in them to move him to ſhew mercy to them that walk thus uprightly; and it is but the ignorance of men to think, that holineſs in converſation muſt preſently fall to the ground, if it hath not a prevalency in it with God to do good to men. You know what the apoſtle ſaith, *Eph.* ii. 8, 9, 10. *You are ſaved by grace through faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God; not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt; we are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, that we ſhould walk in them.*

A man would think that he contradicted himſelf; works have nothing to do in man's ſalvation, nor move God to ſave; *Not of works*, ſaith he, *but of grace*; yet *You are ordained unto good works*: theſe ſtand well together. The apoſtle *Paul* tells *Titus*, that men ſhould *ſtudy good works, for theſe are profitable unto men*: a man ſerves his generation, while he walketh in good works, and he doth good to them, among whom he lives: he ſerves not himſelf in all the good works he doth; for the Lord Chriſt hath fully ſerved his turn already; either we muſt make our performances Chriſt's, or elſe we muſt diſclaim them: what pride and arrogance is this! either men will rule the roaſt, or elſe they will not abide in the houſe! As every man hath his office in a family, ſo every thing in man hath its office: good works have very neceſſary offices in the family, but they were never ordained to be Chriſt's, much leſs to be God's.

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When Christ was tempted by the Pharisees about tribute, he makes this reply; *Give unto Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God, the things that are God's.* Let not the righteousness of men incroach upon God, to take his work upon itself; I tell you, beloved, we know not the evil of these vain imaginations. Should the Lord deal with you according to your own hearts, that as your performances could lay your sins upon Christ, and discharge you, so you should be discharged, when would you ever do it? when (alas) instead of laying old sins upon Christ by new performances, you do but add new sins to the old; all our righteousness, is but a renovation of new transgressions; *For all our righteousnesses,* he speaks of every particular, *are as filthy rags, and a menstruous cloth. Isa.* lxiv. 5. Is this the way to ease a man of his sin, or to get God to discharge him of it, to throw dirt anew in his face? Is this a way for a traitor to get the king's pardon, to come into his presence, and throw poison in his face again? There is not one righteous action a man performs, but he therein anew throws dirt in the face of God by it: because sin, as the Wise Man saith, *Is abomination to the Lord.* Who knows the errors of his life, and the multitude of his failings in the best righteousness he doth? Man's righteousness may serve his own turn, but not God's. Though there be failing in our righteousness, it may be *profitable to men*; but as there is, the eyes of God cannot away with it.

But

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But you will ſay again, Chriſt makes our righteouſneſs to be accepted and pleaſing, by purging away all the filth that is in it; and then it may prevail with God, to lay our iniquities upon him.

I anſwer, it is true, Chriſt purges away all the filthineſs, both of righteouſneſs and unrighteouſneſs in believers; but not that their righteouſneſs may prevail with God to lay iniquity upon him; but that it may be accepted in him, the beloved, as ſervices. He himſelf was without ſpot, or the leaſt ſin, yet he takes not away iniquity by laying it upon himſelf; and if our righteouſneſs be made complete, by his taking away the filth of it, and putting his own perfection on it; it is not that our iniquities may be laid upon him by it, but that it may be accepted in way of ſervice.

I ſhould go yet one ſtep higher, and let you know, that as it is the Lord alone that lays iniquity upon Chriſt, ſo not only all our performances are unable to do it; but even our faith itſelf doth not do it: ye may eaſily perceive, beloved, what I drive at, in all this diſcourſe, namely, to ſtrip the creature ſtark naked, leave it ſhiftleſs, and unable any way to help itſelf, that all the help that it receives, may appear to be of the free grace of God, merely, without its concurrence in it. I ſay, therefore, it is not the faith of believers that lays their iniquities upon Chriſt. Suppoſe thou haſt committed many ſins, and they are apparent; thou wouldſt be rid of them, and hear of them no more; what is the way? Works have not power to do it, you will ſay; but faith is able to diſcharge

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charge the soul from all transgressions, and lay them upon Christ. But I must tell you, though God hath given many glorious fruits and effects to faith, and made it instrumental of much excellent and abundant consolation to his people; yet hath he not honoured it with this, that it should lay iniquity on Christ, or move God to do it.

This cannot be, you will say, for the apostle *Paul* saith expressly, *I conclude that a man is justified by faith, and not by the works of the law;* therefore, we are justified by faith, and what is that, but to have sins laid upon Christ, and we discharged of them?

I confess, it seems to be a strong place at first, where the apostle speaks of justification by faith that consists in the taking away of sins from men; but give me leave to examine it a little, that faith encroach not upon God, and take that which is his own, and which he hath said he will not give to another: I say, it is not the faith of a believer, though ever so strong and powerful, that lays iniquity upon Christ; I shall give you a touch of it for the present: and to this purpose, it were very needful to consider, what it is for a person to be justified; for upon that depends the knowledge of the very thing, *that lays iniquity on Christ.* Time will not give me leave to discourse freely upon it; in short, therefore, I will only shew what it is to be justified. I speak of justification before God, and of his own justification of a man; and it must, of necessity, be granted of all men, that know what justification is in common sense, that a person

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perſon juſtified before God, is ſuch a one, who, when God himſelf makes ſearch to try him, whether he be guilty, or not guilty, of a crime, finds none upon him; and upon not finding any, he pronounceth him juſt. Let men ſay what they will, it is a flat contradiction for God to ſay, this is a juſt perſon in mine eyes, and yet I have ſome tranſgreſſions to charge upon him: how can God ſay he is juſt, and yet charge him with injuſtice done? Therefore he muſt be fully freed from all injuſtice, or God cannot pronounce him a juſt perſon.

You will ſay, No man under heaven can then be juſtified? for God can charge all with tranſgreſſion.

I anſwer, God cannot. That his people have tranſgreſſed, is true; but he finds, in fact, that all their tranſgreſſions are already ſatisfied for by his own Son, though the ſins were afterwards committed; yet upon payment made beforehand, he charges not ſin upon them, having charged it upon Chriſt already, and taken the full payment of him for it. There is no perſon under heaven, that God pronounceth juſt, but he therein ſays, I have not one ſin to charge upon him. It is true, I find many crimes committed by him, but alſo I find, that my Son hath diſcharged them already, and he hath given me good ſatisfaction for them: now then, this being the juſtification of a ſinner before God; how is it poſſible, that faith can diſcharge a perſon from all iniquity, that God himſelf, upon ſtrict ſearch, ſhould find none to be charged upon him?

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him? How can faith do it? Suppose a person had no transgression for God to find, till he believes, yet this believing brings transgression with it, enough for God to find him guilty; that itself is sinful; *I believe, Lord, help my unbelief:* there is a mixture of unbelief in the faith of all believers; and there are many weaknesses in it: and how can that justify a person, that is not able to justify itself? Though Christ was like to us in all things, yet *sin was excepted:* must he himself be free from sin to justify us, that he might purchase our redemption, and shall faith justify us that is not free from sin? If faith justifies a person, what must justify faith? for that must have something to justify it, being not able to justify itself.

But, you will say, this is but argumentation: the apostle *Paul* saith, (*Rom.* v. 1.) *That being justified by faith, we have peace with God;* and since the Holy Ghost saith, *we are justified by faith,* we must not dispute against it.

I will answer in brief, and desire one thing of you, and that is to consult *Beza* upon this place; he renders the words out of the original, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God,* without any stop from the first to last. Our translators render the words thus, *Being justified by faith,* and then put a comma; but as *Beza* renders them (who is accounted a most sincere renderer of the original) he makes no stop: and, if that be true, why may not they be as well rendered thus; *Being justified, by faith we have peace with God?* And so ascribe justification to Christ, as a thing done before,

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before, and let faith have reference to our peace; being juſtified by Chriſt, by faith we come to have peace with God; which ſtands current with the analogy of faith, and truth of the goſpel: *For it is God that juſtifieth*, Rom. viii. 34. Juſtification is truly and properly the work of God himſelf, and cannot be the work of faith*.

But, *Secondly*, ſuppoſe the words to run as they are commonly rendered; I anſwer, then are we to diſtinguiſh in faith two things; there is the *act* of believing, and the *object* on which we believe; and ſo the words may be underſtood thus, *Being juſtified* by the righteouſneſs of faith, or by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt which we believe, *we have peace with God*; and ſo aſcribe our juſtification to the object of our believing, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and not to the act of believing. The truth is, beloved, the act of believing is a work, and as much ours, as our fear, prayer, and love are; and the apoſtle ſhould contradict himſelf when he ſaith, *We are ſaved by grace, through faith, not of works*, if he mean the act of faith; he might as well have ſaid, we are not juſtified by works, but we are juſtified by them.

Finally, to draw towards a concluſion, I anſwer thus; You may conſider juſtification in a double ſenſe, and that, according to the opinion of our divines, there is juſtification in heaven, and in a man's conſcience. Juſtification in heaven, is God's

* Faith is never ſaid to juſtify, nor are we juſtified by it as an act or work, but by the object of it, Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs, who is ſometimes called faith, *Gal.* iii. 23, 24, 25.

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act alone; juſtification in the conſciences of men, is the manifeſtation of that act of God to them, by which a man comes to know, and conſequently to rejoice in it; and ſo you may read the words thus, *Being juſtified by faith,* that is, through faith having the juſtification of God evidenced and manifeſted to our ſpirits, *we have peace with him* *, And, beloved, you ſhall find this to be a very ſolid and genuine interpretation of the words, and agreeable to the ſcriptures; for peace and joy are always appropriated to perſons believing; as much as to ſay, the act of juſtification in heaven, though perfectly done, is yet ſecret in the breaſt of God alone, till he gives perſons faith, that beholds the grace of God, that brings the glad tidings of juſtification to the ſoul, and ſo it rejoiceth in it; therefore the apoſtle prays after this manner, *The Lord fill you with all joy and peace in believing.* So that it is true, we have not the comfort; we cannot ſay particularly to our ſpirits, God hath juſtified me, and I rejoice in this, till we believe; becauſe faith is made, by the Lord, to be the *evidence of things not ſeen,* as in *Heb.* xi. 1. And that is the proper work that God hath given to believing, not to effect any thing to the good of a man, but only to be the witneſs of that good to his ſpirit; and ſo give light to that which was ſecret before. So that ſtill it remains, that the laying of iniquity itſelf upon Chriſt, is the Lord's act, and his only; our faith ſeeth what the Lord hath done; and, when God gives us to believe, faith manifeſts it

* Of this ſee more in the note on page 144.

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to us, and ſo our ſouls come to have peace. In ſum, therefore, beloved, God lays, Chriſt bears, and faith ſees iniquity laid upon him. God, through Chriſt, perfect this work in us, that ſo, faith ſeeing, *we may have all joy and peace in believing.*

SERMON XXI.

To lay our Sins on Chriſt, is the Lord's Prerogative only.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I Find no ſcripture ſo punctually and fully revealing the riches of the grace of God to men, as this that I have now read unto you, ſurpaſſing others depending upon it; and I find no truth more clouded, to the trouble of God's people, than thoſe truths that concern the grace of God to men; which hath exceedingly provoked me to improve that talent I have received, to communicate

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nicate the mind of the Lord, as fully as I may, to them.

Of this truth, upon ſundry occaſions, I have ſpoken ſeveral things out of theſe words; each word containing a ſpecial obſervation by itſelf; every word hath its weight, and ſpeaks admirable grace to the ſons of men. God not only puniſhes Chriſt for men, but he lays the very iniquities of men upon him. The purity of God naturally can never take pleaſure in a filthy veſſel. Should Chriſt be puniſhed over and over again for the ſins of men; yet if, for all this, they lay upon themſelves, God muſt abhor them. There can be no expectance of a ſmile, from the face of God, upon any creature in the world, till it be all fair; and this cannot be, till all ſpots of ſin be taken from them; and this taking away of the filthineſs of the creature, is not a kind of ſuppoſed taking of it away, but is a real act of God; he makes Chriſt as very a ſinner as the creature himſelf was*: *He was made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. v. 21. The Lord laid our very iniquities themſelves upon him: this is the greateſt grace the ſoul can have comfort in, in this life, that iniquity is done away; and, therefore it concerns all that hear ſuch admirable tidings, to know from whence it comes, who undertakes this great work, to diſcharge a poor ſinner, and to lay all its iniquities on Chriſt. Had all the creatures in the world undertaken, with all their

* That is, by imputation, which is a real act of God, and by which all the ſins of the ſinner are put upon Chriſt, ſo that he, ſtanding in his ſtead, is reckoned in the eye of juſtice as what the ſinner himſelf is. See the notes on page 11 and 16.

ſtrength,

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ſtrength, to lay them on him, it would have broke the back of them all, ſo much as to lift at ſin to lay it upon him; therefore the grace of the Lord is evident in this, that it is he himſelf that laid iniquity upon him. No undertakers in heaven or earth could have brought this great work to paſs, but the Lord alone. It is ſtrange, that Chriſt ſhould be enabled to undertake ſo much as he did; yet God did not oblige him to take and lay our iniquities upon himſelf. Chriſt learned obedience in this, and waited the pleaſure of his Father to lay iniquity upon him, and doth not lay it on himſelf; *I came not to do my own will,* (ſaith he) *but the will of him that ſent me:* nay, Chriſt was not the firſt motive to it; but the thoughts of God's own love towards poor creatures, were the motives to himſelf to give him to bear their ſins; and if Chriſt himſelf doth not lay iniquity upon himſelf, much leſs doth the righteouſneſs of man lay it on him. It is not all the prayers, the tears, the faſting, the repentance, though ever ſo perfect and complete, that lays any one iniquity upon Chriſt; it is the Lord alone that does it; nay, none of theſe performances have the leaſt moving power in them to perſuade him to it; the Lord moves himſelf to do it: all our ſervices are for other purpoſes; they have no prevalency with him at all; no, our faith itſelf lays not our iniquities on Chriſt; but, as I ſaid, the Lord lays, Chriſt bears, our faith doth but ſee and make evident that, in time, which before was hid and not ſeen.

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We cannot amplify the particulars so largely as necessity requires; I must proceed to what remains behind. Now, beloved, I shall shew you clearly, I hope, that it is not to be imagined, that any thing in the world can possibly lay iniquity upon Christ, but only the Lord himself; for the clearing of which I desire to take some specialities into consideration.

1. None in the world hath any thing to do with iniquity, to dispose of it, but only the Lord; and therefore none can lay it upon Christ, but only he. For the better clearing of which, you must understand, that iniquity, or sin (as in 1 *John* iii. 4.) *is the transgression of the law: for where there is no law, there is no transgression,* as the apostle *Paul* speaks: the meaning is this, transgression is a swerving or going astray from the pleasure of God revealed in his law; nothing is transgression, but what is against him, and his mind revealed to men: and whereas in a subordination there may be a transgression against men, one against another; yet all such transgression hath its denomination, not as man's, but as God's will is transgressed. As for instance, *Thou shalt not commit adultery;* in the breach of this, here is a transgression of a man against a man; for one man to commit adultery with another man's wife, is an offence against her husband; yet this were not properly a transgression, if it were not a transgression of the law God made against it; *For where there is no law, there is no transgression.* To come to the purpose in hand, transgression is only against God;

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God; for which cauſe, *David*, though he committed adultery with *Uriah*'s wife, and ſlew him with the ſword of his enemy, and therein tranſgreſſed againſt thoſe perſons; yet *David* riſeth to the fountain of tranſgreſſion, and ſo to the true nature of it, when he confeſſeth, *Pſal.* li. 4. *Againſt thee only have I ſinned, and done evil in thy ſight.*

And you ſhall find, when *Samuel* had been ſet up to be judge over *Iſrael*, and the people began to deſpiſe and reject him, becauſe they would have a king, as other people had; there was a ſinning againſt *Samuel* in ſubordination; yet the Lord ſaith, *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me.* They ſinned againſt God principally, and *Samuel* ſubordinately, becauſe they ſinned againſt God's ordinance; *Samuel* being ſubſtituted by God over them.

If ſin then be againſt God, againſt whom it is committed, then it is only in his power to diſpoſe of it at his pleaſure. Suppoſe a man owe a debt to another, it is not in the power of a third party to diſpoſe of this debt as he pleaſeth, but in the creditor himſelf only; if a creditor ſhould arreſt a debtor, and make him pay, or lie by it himſelf, it is not in the power of any other, to take ſurety in the ſtead of this debtor; the creditor may take a ſurety if he will, and it is at his pleaſure, whether a ſurety ſhall ſtand, or be accepted, or no. Every tranſgreſſion of a man is a debt to the Lord; and, as it is a debt to him, ſo it is only in his power, and at his pleaſure to diſpoſe of it; whether or no,

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persons shall lie by it till they have paid the utmost farthing themselves; or whether he will take a surety to stand in their room, and pay the debt for them. From hence are these words, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden:* as much as to say, I will take a surety for as many as I list, and none for so many as I please; such and such, I will take a surety for; and therefore you shall find, that in this business of laying iniquity upon Christ, he goes under the notion of a mediator; he is the mediator of a better covenant, or testament: as much as to say, Christ himself will not take upon him, to dispose of the sins committed against the Father; he indeed mediates with him; he is contented, if the Father please to make him a surety, he will see him paid. A mediator is one that comes between men to over-rule them if possible; so Christ deals with the Father, he will become the surety of a better covenant, or testament; and accordingly, be the surety for such as God seeth good, and no other; and the rest they shall, they must lie by it. And therefore you shall see, that for so many as God is contented, Christ should be their surety; he is so far from disposing of their sins upon himself, that though he paid the utmost farthing, and the Father was fully satisfied with it; yet he acknowledged for all that, that this very suretyship of his, instead of others, was an act of grace, and an act of grace to himself; *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.* How was it a gift? Did not Christ pay well for them? Did not he lay down the

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the price of his blood, a satisfactory price? Yea, he did; yet, *Thou gavest them me*, saith Christ: how so, will you say? I answer, God might have chosen, whether Christ should come to offer satisfaction, or whether he would accept of it made by him the surety; in that he would accept of a price, there was a gift.

2. It must only be the Lord's work to dispose of the sins of men, to lay them on Christ; nothing else could do it; none but the Lord could qualify and fit Christ to bear the sins of men: none but he alone could do it. Suppose it were in the power of the creature to lay iniquity of men upon Christ, what could this avail, except Christ, when it is laid upon him, should become able to bear it and not sink under it, when it was laid upon him; therefore none could lay it with effect, but God alone. There are two things that are exceeding necessary, that iniquities might be laid beneficially upon him, and all the world could do neither of them.

1. That he should have a body, wherein to bear iniquity.

2. Having a body, that he should be steeled above natural strength; that that body prepared, should not shrink under such a weight.

Now this is the Lord's own work; nay, all the world could never reach it but he, to furnish Christ with both these; and you shall find both of them intimated in one expression, in *Heb.* x. 6, 7. *When he came into the world he said, burnt-offerings and sacrifices thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou*

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prepared me: they are both intimated in these words, *A body hast thou prepared me:* where you shall find, that it is the Lord himself that furnishes him with this body.

1. There must be a body, that he might come to do the will of God; *A body hast thou prepared me, that I should do thy will, O God!* that is, do it in a body. And, 2. note, that this body is not an ordinary one, but prepared; therefore in the margin it is, a body hast thou fitted me; as a man fits a case to a thing to be put into it; that builds a house, a fit habitation for himself to dwell in; or a fort for some to be fortified in it, he prepares it accordingly; so, *A body hast thou prepared me;* that is, a body hast thou fitted for me, and steeled it, that it may be of more than natural strength to bear the sins of men. The divine nature is incapable of bearing transgression, therefore there must be a body given and prepared, that may be subject to bear; and this body, because the weight of sin is infinite, and enough to press an ordinary one into hell, must be steeled with an infinite strength above nature, that it may stand stedfastly under it, and firm to the work; therefore the Psalmist tells us, *Thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, thou hast laid help upon one that is mighty:* it is not an ordinary body, that this help must be laid upon, but must be mighty; therefore Christ tells us, in *John* iv. 34. that he himself had received the spirit, not by measure; there was more strength given to him, than ordinary strength, that is common to the creature.

Now,

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Now, beloved, except any creature in the world could thus furniſh Chriſt, and ſteel him that he might not ſink, to what purpoſe ſhould any lay iniquity upon him? and therefore in *Iſa.* xlii. 16. you ſhall find, that he doth not only call us out to behold his ſervant whom he hath choſen, but he tells us, how he diſpoſes of him, that he may be for our uſe; *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold,---I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant to the people.* I have kept thee as well as given thee; the Father muſt help Chriſt in this work, as well as give him; there muſt be furniſhing with abilities to the employment, as well as a calling forth to it; to what purpoſe is it to call a multitude of people to reſiſt a common enemy? What uſe will they be of, except they be furniſhed with arms and ammunition, and all things fitting for the ſervice they are called out unto? If iniquity be laid upon Chriſt, and he not furniſhed to bear it, to what purpoſe is it? He will ſhrink under the burthen, and we periſh in his ſinking. It is not of ſmall conſequence therefore to know, that the Lord hath laid iniquity upon him.

3. None but the Lord alone can lay iniquity upon Chriſt, in that none but he hath ſo much power over, and intereſt in Chriſt, to prevail with him to be content to bear it: all the world could never have won Chriſt to put his ſhoulders to undergo ſuch a burthen, but only the power of the Lord prevailed with him. Beloved, it is not ſuch a light weight, to be under the weight of all the ſins of all the elect at once, that Chriſt ſhould make

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make so light of it, as to take it upon himself. This one complaint of Christ may resolve us of the weight of transgression that was upon him; *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;* and he sweat drops of blood as water, because of that agony his soul was in, by reason of sin that was then upon him; and it made him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* so heavy was it upon him. Who in the world ever had, hath, or ever shall have, so much interest in Christ, to prevail with him to take the sins of his people upon himself, if they could lay them upon him? Though the elect of God reap an unsearchable fruit from hence, yet it is not they, nor their ease, which is the prime motive which prevailed with Christ to bear them; but that which chiefly prevailed with him, was the pleasuring of his Father: he knew well enough how hot the heart of God was set upon this, that the iniquities of men should be borne by him, and carried away from them, and they discharged: now, for the pleasuring of him, he was content to do it: and you shall find much of Christ's discourse, and of the prophets that spake of him, tending to this; that the eye of Christ was principally upon the pleasuring of his Father in bearing the sins of men: in *Isa.* liii. 10, 11, 12. three times you shall find it expressed, *The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand: he shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied: and it pleased the Lord to bruise him:* still you see the eye of Christ was upon the satisfying of his Father, and pleasuring of him in that he did;

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did; that his pleaſure ſhould proſper in the work, therefore the hand of Chriſt takes it; that the Father be ſatisfied with this, he is content to be in travail in his ſoul, and to bear iniquity; in that it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him, therefore was he content to be broken. All the world could never prevail with Chriſt to undergo it, had it not been that he might give his Father content. It is worth your obſervation, what is recorded in *Heb.* x. 5, 6, 7. mark it well, I pray, when Chriſt comes into the world, he ſaith, *Sacrifice and burnt-offerings thou wouldeſt not, in burnt-offerings and ſin-offerings thou hadſt no pleaſure; then ſaid I, Lo, I come:* obſerve his motive to come into the world, namely to do that which burnt offerings and ſacrifices could not do. *There was a remembrance of ſin,* ſaith the apoſtle, *every year, ſince the blood of bulls and goats could not take away ſin;* therefore the Lord was not pleaſed and contented with burnt-offerings and ſacrifices; upon this, ſaith Chriſt, *Lo, I come;* as if he had ſaid, ſeeing they cannot give thee content, that thou mayeſt have pleaſure, lo, I come to do the work thoroughly, that thou mayeſt be ſatisfied.

4. None but the Lord could lay iniquity upon Chriſt, becauſe, none but he could give him a fit and proportionable reward for bearing it. It is fit every one ſhould have conſideration for the work he doth; and it is moſt certain, Chriſt in undertaking to bear the ſins of his people, hath an eye to a proportionable conſideration for it; now none but the Lord could give him it; therefore, none

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none else could win him to lay iniquity upon him. In *Heb.* xii. 2, 3. it is plain, that Christ had an eye to some good consideration; *Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame, and now sits at the right hand of God:* He did not only suffer, but also despised the shame that sin brought upon him; for he being made sin, became also a shame, and he despised that; and what was that which moved him to it? It was joy; and what was that joy? *He sits at the right hand of God his Father;* and who could thus reward Christ but the Lord? And, beloved, you shall find, that God, when he puts him on to bear the sins of men, he proposes rewards to him for his encouragement: in *Psal.* ii. 6--8. where he speaks of anointing of Christ to be his *king upon his holy hill; Ask of me,* saith he, *and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession:* here is that which God will give to Christ, and wherefore doth he make this deed of gift to him, but that it may be a reward to him for his sufferings, and so encourage him to the work? And for this purpose let us consider that passage in *Phil.* ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *Who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross:* (mark what follows) *Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of JESUS, every knee should bow, both of things in heaven,*

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heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus is the Lord. Here you ſee expreſsly, how the Lord rewards him for this very thing, that he *became obedient to death, even the death of the croſs,* while *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God.*

And, indeed, beloved, no marvel that the Lord will propoſe ſuch a reward to Chriſt, to make him ſatisfaction for the taking upon him the ſins of men; for conſider men as they were to bear their own tranſgreſſions themſelves, and as ſome are yet to bear them; alas! what payment was the Lord likely to have! payment like that of broken debtors: he muſt have given time, to all eternity, before he could have his debt paid; whereas Chriſt, coming into the world, makes round, preſent, and ready payment; he pays all at once: and is not this a good reparation? When as a debtor is broke, and the creditor is to ſtay many years for his money, and take it by piece-meal too, would it not be thank-worthy for one to come now, and pay down the full ſum upon the nail, ready money? When Chriſt came into the world he paid down all at once; God hath all from him (as they ſay) in ready caſh. From hence there is a tranſlating of the debt from us, broken debtors, to one that is mighty; he bears the burthen, and pays the debt for us; the Lord is ſatisfied to his content, and he requites him for it. Now if all that we ever did, or can do, be not a requital of him, how can we expect that we ſhould lay our iniquities upon Chriſt?

Now

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Now for application. If it be the Lord himſelf that lays our iniquities upon Chriſt, it is but meet and right that he ſhould have *the praiſe of the glory of his own grace;* and that nothing in the world ſhould go away with the praiſe of it from him. I remember a complaint of the poet, who, it ſeems, had made ſome verſes that carried ſome credit with them, and ſome foiſter had taken it upon himſelf; "I have made the verſes, and ano-"ther hath the honor of them; as the bee makes "honey, and another hath the fruit of it." Beloved, it may be the juſt complaint of the Lord to the ſons of men; I have laid the iniquities of you all upon Chriſt, and every thing almoſt runs away with the honor of it; as if ſomething elſe did eaſe you of the burthen of them, and I am neglected. Now ſo long as you have theſe vain conceits in you, that any thing you do becomes your eaſe, and the lightening of the burthen of your ſins, they will go away with the praiſe that is due to God. To whomſoever we apprehend ourſelves beholding, as we ſay, for ſuch a courteſy, ſuch a one ſhall go away with the praiſe of it. 2 *Sam.* xvi. 1, 2, I remember how *Ziba*, the ſervant of *Mephiboſheth*, *Saul*'s ſon, came to *David*, with the ſtolen goods of his maſter, and pretended that it was his own courteſy to *David*, that he had brought ſo many mules, and a large quantity of proviſion; *David* aſked for his maſter, he belies his maſter, and tells him he abides at *Jeruſalem*, hoping that *Iſrael* would ſet the crown upon his head; but mark it well, whilſt that *David* is poſ-

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ſeſt that *Ziba* is he that hath done him a courteſy, he ſhall go away with the glory of it, and *Mephiboſheth* ſhall be neglected; and *David* gives all the land of *Mephiboſheth* to *Ziba* upon this miſtake, and ſo he carried away all the praiſe of the courteſy from *Mephiboſheth*. And ſo it is moſt true, beloved, as long as we reckon our own holy duties, repentance, and enlargement in prayer, &c. as the bringers of refreſhment to our ſpirits, and the unloaders of our hearts from our tranſgreſſions, that are the burthen of the ſoul; ſo long theſe are exalted above meaſure. Hence theſe ſtrange epithets and expreſſions are fixed to them; "Oh! "the omnipotency of repentance! and of meeting "with God in faſting and humiliation! oh! the "prevalency of tears to waſh away ſin!" They ſuppoſing that theſe eaſe us of the weight of ſin, go away with the glory. Oh! who is omnipotent but the God of heaven! What waſhes away the ſins of men but the blood of Chriſt? ſhall we give the glory to *Ziba*, that is due to *Mephiboſheth*? in 2 *Sam.* xix. 24. you ſhall hear how *Mephiboſheth* makes his apology for himſelf, and pleads his ſincerity to the king, and declares how his ſervant had abuſed him; and then *David* reſtored half his lands again to him; but yet *Ziba* muſt ſhare with him ſtill.

Oh! beloved, I deſire you to deal more equally with God; let him have all the praiſe; let not *Ziba* and *Mephiboſheth* divide the land; let not your performances ſhare with God in the praiſe of his grace, in laying iniquities upon Chriſt.

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It is God alone that lays your iniquities upon Chriſt, and your performances cozen you, while they tell you, that they eaſe you of your burthen, and lay it upon him. Oh! turn them out, and let them not ſhare with the Lord in the praiſe due to his name.

It was the ſin of the *Jews*, when they had gotten a prey, they preſently thought it was their own nets and drags that got it; and therefore (ſaith the prophet) *They ſacrifice to their own nets, and offer incenſe to their drags.* Beloved, you will offer incenſe to your performances, as long as you go to them to be your deliverers. The deliverance from the weight of your ſin, is not from the virtue of any thing that you do; it is the Lord alone that lays iniquity upon Chriſt; and, therefore, let him alone carry away the praiſe and glory of it; let nothing rob him of it.

In paradiſe the Lord made a large grant to the ſons of men in *Adam; Of all the trees in the garden thou ſhalt eat, ſave only the tree of knowledge of good and evil:* he reſerved that one tree to himſelf, and but that one; he gave him of his bounty to eat of every one beſides; and yet ſuch was his itching humour, that of all others, fain would he be meddling there, till he brought ruin upon his own head. In the goſpel, all our grants are large; *All are yours, and you are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's: God ſpared not his own Son, but gave him up to death for us all;* nay more, *I am your God, and you are my people.* He thinks not much to give his Son, nor himſelf, to his people; there is but

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but one thing he keeps to himself, *Isa.* xlii. 8. *My glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images*; all that the Lord reserves to himself, is but *the praise and glory of his own grace.* Oh! pilfer not that from God, which, when you have it, will do you no good in the world! and seeing he will have only this, do not grudge it him. It is not out of niggardliness that God keeps this to himself, for in *Isa.* xlii. 6. you shall find that he is bountiful enough for all that; *I will give thee for a covenant to the people, to open the blind eyes, and to bring the prisoners out of prison:* that will do us more good; and, that he may do us good, his own Son shall be given for a covenant; but *my glory, that shall not be given to another,* as it follows presently after. Oh! therefore, let not your performances, be they ever so exact, aspire so high, as to usurp that glory that is due to the Lord alone!

But some will be ready to say, though our performances do not lay our iniquities upon Christ, and, therefore, ought not to have the glory of it; yet, surely, the Lord requires these duties, that he may lay our iniquities upon Christ, and so honor our services as the motives by which he is pleased to lay them upon him.

Do not mistake, beloved, performances are not only not the principal efficients, but they are not so much as the instruments, or means, of laying the iniquities of men upon Christ; nay, not as motives: and it is a gross mistake, (I would the truth might shine more clear, that I might undeceive

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ceive men;) men run away with vain imaginations, that the renewing of faith and repentance is a new laying of iniquity upon Christ; or, that the Lord anew lays it on him, when we renew these duties; I say, this is a gross mistake; for God doth not lay iniquity upon Christ upon the performance of them; nay, these have no stroke in it. I would fain know this one thing, Christ being now in heaven, whether he now, before the throne of his Father, actually bears the iniquities of men? Doth Christ stand as a sinner before the face of God in glory? certainly no unclean thing shall enter into the heavenly *Jerusalem*; and if, upon the renewing our repentance and faith, our sins we commit are carried from us, and laid upon him in heaven, then he stands besmeared with the sins of men as in heaven, in glory. One sin is committed at this instant by the believer, another at that, and another at a third; and so, from the first moment, to the end of the world there is a continual succession of acts of sin by believers. Well, what do men do? They believe and repent; and what do these do? When men believe and repent, (you say) they lay iniquity upon Christ, and then it is upon him.

How can it possibly enter into the heart of any man, that he that is set down in glory with the Father, having done his work, finished transgression, and put an end to sin, by one sacrifice upon the cross, should yet still bear the iniquities of men upon him, before him?

Besides, beloved, I beseech you consider this one

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one thing, if Chriſt hath iniquity laid upon him now, and hereafter, as men believe and repent, what courſe muſt he take to rid himſelf of it? If there be iniquity upon him, there muſt be a way for him to rid himſelf of it, and it muſt be taken off moſt certainly: but when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt, he, by one offering, did ſo perfect the work, that he ſits down, (ſaith the apoſtle in *Heb.* x. 12.) *For ever at the right hand of God; and there remaineth now no more ſacrifice for ſin. Without ſhedding of blood, there is no remiſſion.* Wherever ſin is found, there muſt be ſhedding of blood, or elſe there is no remiſſion; and if ſin be laid upon Chriſt, there muſt be a new ſhedding of blood before it can be taken away.

And therefore you muſt conſider, that this laying of ſin upon Chriſt, is a buſineſs, that God hath done long ago, and not now to be done; for the text ſaith not, God lays, or will lay, iniquity upon him; but hath laid it on him: therefore, ſaith the apoſtle in *Heb.* ix. 28. *Chriſt was once offered to take away the ſins of many; and unto them that look for him, he ſhall appear the ſecond time without ſin unto ſalvation.* Chriſt himſelf muſt appear without ſin, that he might have power to prevail with the Lord: it is obſervable, that while ſin lay upon him, and he was forced to bear it, he himſelf was forſaken of the Father.

In *Dan.* ix. 24, *Seventy weeks ſhall be determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finiſh tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs,*

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righteousness; mark, I pray you, these *seventy weeks* were expired, when Christ was upon the cross, then sin was finished, and therefore he said, *It is finished*; therefore, the laying of iniquity upon Christ, is not a new thing, now to be done; neither is it your faith and repentance that lay it upon him, but it is a thing done long ago: therefore cast off that gross conceit, as if God did daily lay your sins upon Christ, as you daily renew your faith and repentance.

But what do they then serve for, will you say?

I answer, They serve for this purpose; the Lord is pleased when he hath freely, and of his own accord, pardoned the sins of men, having laid them upon Christ, to reveal himself in this his grace, and manifest to them that which he hath done long before, when they meet with him in prayer, fasting, and ordinances; he is pleased to manifest in them to us, what he hath already done, and not that they are yet to be done, much less that these things do them.

Well, is it the Lord that lays iniquity upon Christ? Then behold matter of admirable consolation: none in the world like this, the Lord hath laid it; if any thing else had, but he alone, men were undone for ever. God is unchangeable, *I am the Lord, I change not*, saith he, *therefore ye sons of* Jacob *are not consumed.* That which the Lord doth, is for ever, not to be revoked and altered again; that which the creature doth is changeable, but God changes not.

But

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But I muſt haſten. In the laſt place, is it then the Lord that lays iniquity upon Chriſt; then take it off from him who dare, and bring it back again to the poor ſoul, from whom the Lord hath taken it, and laid it upon him: who art thou that dareſt to diſpute againſt God? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make of one lump a veſſel of honor, and another of diſhonor? If the Lord is pleaſed of his good will and free grace, to make thee a veſſel unto honor, by purging thee thoroughly from ſin, and laying it upon Chriſt, wilt thou diſpute with God, and ſay, thy iniquities are not laid upon him?

In *Gen.* xlviii. *Joſeph* brings his two ſons, *Manaſſes* and *Ephraim*, to *Jacob* his father, to be bleſſed by him before he died; he brings *Manaſſes*, and ſets on *Jacob*'s right hand, and *Ephraim* on his left hand; but *Jacob*, when he began to bleſs them, changed his hand, and put his left hand upon *Manaſſes* the eldeſt, and his right hand upon *Ephraim* the youngeſt: Mark, what ſaith *Joſeph* then? *Not ſo, my father, for this is the eldeſt; yea, I know it my ſon, I know it,* ſaith *Jacob, very well:* that is not the purpoſe, Manaſſes *ſhall be great, but his younger brother ſhall be greater than he: Joſeph* would needs correct his father, thinking he did not prudently in that he did, and that his hand was not placed right, and therefore he would be mending it. Juſt ſo we judge of God's proceedings, in the diſpenſation of his grace to men; we think that he deals imprudently, when he lays his right hand of mercy upon the

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head of a notorious ſinner, an enemy; and his left hand of ſeverity upon an elder brother, a ſincere man, one that walks uprightly: not ſo, my father, ſay men, that is a wicked man, a notorious ſinner; this is an honeſt, righteous, and godly man; this is the elder, lay thy right hand of grace upon him: I know very well, (ſaith God) what they are; it is my pleaſure, the youngeſt ſhall have the bleſſing, and the eldeſt go without it; *you are righteous in your generation,* (ſaith Chriſt) *but the publicans and harlots ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven, and yourſelves ſhall be ſhut out.* Beloved, let the Lord lay his hand where he pleaſe, and let him diſpoſe of iniquity as he ſeeth good, and lay whoſe ſins he pleaſe upon Chriſt: *Even while we were enemies we were reconciled:* Let no man therefore look upon human prudence, nor diſcourſe according to reaſon; but let us look upon the act of God in diſpenſing of his grace, as he who is wiſdom itſelf, orders it; and know that he which cannot err, diſpoſeth of iniquity, and layeth it upon Chriſt; and whom he bleſſeth, is, and ſhall be bleſſed. I may ſpeak of the act of God, in laying men's ſins upon Chriſt once paſſed, and ſet forth the unchangeableneſs of it, by that act of *Iſaac* bleſſing *Jacob,* though *Jacob* got the bleſſing by deceit from his father, making him to believe, that he was his eldeſt ſon; and *Eſau* coming in afterwards for the bleſſing, ſaith *Iſaac, I have bleſſed him, and he ſhall be bleſſed:* ſhall *Iſaac,* a man, ſtand to what he hath done, though gotten from him by a mere cheat; and ſhall the Lord change

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change in what he hath done; having laid iniquity upon Chriſt, ſhall he take it off again? *He is not a man that he ſhould lie, nor the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent;* and therefore, beloved, you may take up that glorious challenge of the apoſtle in *Rom.* viii. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth.* There is the ground of all; ſo ſay to your own ſpirits, who ſhall call me to account for my ſins? Who ſhall lay them to my charge? Who will make me bear them on my own back? It is God himſelf hath taken them off, and diſcharged me: *It is God that juſtifieth me;* if man had juſtified me, he might have been miſtaken; had he pronounced me innocent, I might have borne my ſins ſtill. *Chriſt died, or is rather riſen again:* wherefore, who ſhall lay any thing to our charge? And ſo you may trample over all the accuſations of Satan upon this very conſideration, that God *hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

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SERMON XXII.

Our Sins already laid on Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

THE laſt day, as you may remember, we took notice of the author of this grace, *Of laying iniquity upon Chriſt:* it is the Lord's own act; none but he laid it on him; Chriſt took not the office of prieſthood upon himſelf, but as he was called of God. The office of his prieſthood was the bearing of ſin; that was the prime buſineſs of the high-prieſt to repreſent all the people, and to enter into the holy of holies to bear their ſins before the Lord. *No man takes this honor upon him, but he that is called of God, as* Aaron *was,* Heb. v. 4. Therefore the apoſtle ſaith expreſly, the Lord ſpake thus, I have ſaid, *Thou art a prieſt for ever,* that was his call; and for the confirmation of it, he eſtabliſhed it by an oath, *The Lord hath ſworn thou art a prieſt for ever,* Heb. vii. 21. And

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And if Chriſt himſelf takes not upon him to diſpoſe of the ſins of men, much leſs is it in the power of any mere creature. It is not in the power of any righteouſneſs we do, though ever ſo complete, no nor of our faith, to lay iniquity upon Chriſt; *The Lord lays, Chriſt bears, and faith beholds this iniquity thus laid by him, and borne by Chriſt;* and ſo the ſoul receives comfort upon the apprehenſion of it. None but the Lord can poſſibly lay iniquity upon Chriſt, becauſe none hath to do with the diſpoſing of it but he; *Againſt thee, thee only, have I ſinned, and done evil in thy ſight;* yet he had ſinned againſt *Uriah* and his wife; but properly the ſin was againſt God, as that ſin was a tranſgreſſion of his law: if the debt be God's, who hath power to diſpoſe of it, either to take it off the principal, or transfer it to a ſurety, but he that is the creditor? What hath any man to do with another man's debt?

Again, None but the Lord can diſpoſe of iniquity, becauſe none hath ſo much intereſt in Chriſt as he hath; it is a burthen of a heavy weight, and he muſt have great intereſt that can prevail with him to bear it. Though it is true, we, the ſons of men, partake of abundance of comfort in the diſcharge of ſin by Chriſt; yet his primary intention in bearing it, was not the ſalvation of man, but the ſatisfaction of his Father; *Lo, I come, to do thy will*, Heb. x. 9. *This is my meat and drink, to do the will of him that ſent me*, John iv. 34. *Father, I have glorified thee on earth, therefore glorify me*, John xvii. 1—4, 5. Still the eye

eye of Chriſt ran upon the pleaſuring of his Father; this is that which made him ſo hearty in bearing ſin, *The pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand*, Iſa. liii. 10.

Again, None could fit Chriſt to bear ſin but the Lord, therefore none elſe could lay it on him: a body he muſt have, or he could not bear ſin: the God-head cannot bear ſin; *And a body*, ſaith Chriſt, *haſt thou prepared me*, Heb. x. 5. all the world could not prepare a fit body to bear ſin for Chriſt; a body natural is but weak; and too weak to bear itſelf up under ſuch a weight. A body there muſt be that is ſupernatural, ſteeled and ſupported; and this alſo is the mere work of the Lord: *Iſa.* xlii. 6. *Behold my ſervant, whom I uphold;* ſaith he, God muſt uphold him; *I will keep thee, I will help thee, I will ſtrengthen thee, I will hold thine hands.*

Finally, None but the Lord could requite Chriſt for ſuch a ſervice as this; it is fit he ſhould have his pay for his pains: the Lord tells him plainly, that upon the terms of bearing iniquity, let him aſk of him, and he ſhall *have the Heathen for his inheritance, and the utmoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion*, Pſal. ii. 8. Nay, he ſaith, becauſe he was *obedient to the death, even the death of the croſs, therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name*, Phil. ii. 8, 9.

It ſhould therefore ſerve to put the people of God upon the admiration of the great love of God, (ſeeing it is only the Lord that layeth iniquity upon Chriſt) to give unto him the praiſe of the

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the glory of his grace: oh, let nothing go away with that, ſeeing none but the Lord doth the thing!

And to this end, beloved, the Lord muſt open your eyes that you may ſee it; it is he alone that doth it; but till you ſee it, whatever you may think of yourſelves, you will ſacrifice to nets and drags inſtead of him; if righteouſneſs ſeem to be the eaſing of burthens in ſpirit; then that ſhall, and will be exalted above meaſure: from whence proceed theſe ſtrange expreſſions, oh, the omnipotency of faſting, prayer, and repentance! What is this but to give the glory of the Lord to our ſervices, as if they diſcharged us of our ſins, when it is he only that diſcharges us of them? But I muſt haſten.

There is another obſervable paſſage in theſe words, more obſervable indeed than heeded by moſt; and that is to be taken from the circumſtance of time, when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt: the text ſaith, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Satan knows well enough of what great conſequence this circumſtance of time is both to the manifeſtation of the glory of God's grace, and to the eſtabliſhment of the comforts of his people; and therefore he hath raiſed a foul duſt to miſguide poor wretches, that they may not lay hold upon it, and the comfort that will flow from it. The text ſaith not, the Lord doth, or will lay, iniquity on him; much leſs that the time is over, and he will not now do it:

Satan

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Satan is very buſy with tender, ignorant hearts, either to perſuade them that the work is now a doing, or hereafter ſhall be done, but not yet done, or the time is overſlipped; it might have been done, if men had not neglected the opportunity; but now it is too late; it is never to be done.

The laſt of theſe hath troubled the hearts of many people; whence come theſe expreſſions; I have neglected the day of my viſitation, ſaith one; I had the opportunity, the preſence of the Spirit of God; my fear is, that was the day of God's grace to me, but I have let it ſlip; and now there is no more hope left for me: but, beloved, let the evident word of the Lord himſelf be your guide, and know, that every thing that is ſpoken, contrary to the mind of the Lord revealed in it, is but the natural fruit of the father of lies, who is a lyar from the beginning. The Lord hath laid iniquity upon Chriſt: hath he done it already, and is it now to be done? Nay, hath he done it, and doth he revoke it, and will not ſuffer it to be done? the point then briefly is this.

This gracious act of the Lord's laying iniquity upon Chriſt, is not now, or hereafter to be done, much leſs a thing he never wills to be done, but it is a thing he hath already done.

Every ſchool-boy will be able to tell you, that this expreſſion [*hath laid*] imports the time paſt, the word being in the preterperfect tenſe; it is not in the preſent tenſe, the Lord layeth; nor in the future tenſe, the Lord will lay; but in the preterperfect tenſe, the Lord hath done it; it is an act paſt.

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past. I remember what was said unto that resolute king; *Let not him that putteth on the harness boast himself, as he that puts it off,* 1 Kings xx. 11. Beloved, you know, when armies go out, there are tremblings of heart, what the success may be, till the fight be over; when the victory is gotten, then there is joy, the thing is done. When a poor prisoner lies in prison condemned, though he have friends to beg his pardon; while that is in agitation, and not actually done, he is in suspence, between fear and hope, and restless in spirit; but when the act of grace is once past, and the king's hand and seal to it, the thing is done, then his spirit comes to have rest: even so the rest of your spirits will lye in this, not that a thing is in writing; or that there are previous acts to be done to produce this act of laying iniquity upon Christ; but that the thing is dispatched to your hands before; you may see it at this instant done and finished: though the Lord in himself be unchangeable, yet our unbelieving hearts are suspicious of it, and we are ready to cry, "A bird in the hand, is worth two in the bush:" now to condescend to the weakness of men, he is pleased, not that the bird should be in the bush, but in our hands; not that he should have his mercies within himself, but he passes them over, and gives the possession of them to us, that so we may be the securer in them.

I doubt not, beloved, but by this time, the truth is cleared to you, and that you find abundance of establishment in it so cleared; therefore we

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we ſhall endeavour to let you know (as fully as poſſibly we may) *when it was, that the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt.*

But before we fall upon that particular, there is one caution I ſhall recommend to your conſideration, as very neceſſary to be conſidered, for the avoiding of confuſion; which is this, that you carefully diſtinguiſh between the Lord's ſole and only act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, and the believer's act of applying this grace. We are now upon the former conſideration, the Lord's ſole and only act without the creature, in laying iniquity upon Chriſt.

I find, beloved, that too many poor wretches, out of ignorance, not underſtanding diſtinctly the courſe of God's proceedings with men, are apt to confound God's ſole act of laying, and the believer's act of applying together, as if they were both one; as if our ſins were laid upon Chriſt, only when we believe; and as if that were the only thing, whereby they are laid upon him; but it is certain, that theſe are diſtinct acts: I hope I ſhall not need to trouble myſelf, or you, much, to make it appear that they are; the agent acting, and the inſtrument manifeſting, are different. Though the Lord gives men to believe; yet the putting forth of that act is man's, by the power of the Lord; as for the laying of iniquity itſelf upon Chriſt, this is ſolely the Lord's own act; our application doth but introduce the knowledge of that which the Lord hath done before, and ſo we come to have the comfort. Now it is true, indeed, that

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in reſpect of the application of this grace to ourſelves, *The laying of iniquity upon Chriſt*, may be conſidered either preſent or future; that is, at this preſent inſtant, a perſon may believe this grace of God, and ſo here is now an application of it; and poſſibly one, that doth not for the preſent believe, and apply it to himſelf, may believe, and in that reſpect, the applying it, may be future; but for the act itſelf, of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, that is the Lord's, and is neither preſent, nor future, but was before, and is already paſt and gone.

The truth is, it is not poſſible that any perſon can truly believe his iniquities are laid upon Chriſt, except there be a previous act of the Lord's laying them on him; the Lord's act of laying, muſt go before our act of applying it to ourſelves. It is not poſſible for any man to act any thing, but there muſt be an object in being, about which it is converſant. Suppoſe a man believe his ſins are laid upon Chriſt, I would fain know, whether his believing be true or falſe; if he believe indeed, he hath a foundation for this faith of his, and what is that? He hath a grant from the Lord, that is the very being of his faith; a grant, I ſay, he finds out, that is a ſtirring up of his believing: now ſuppoſe I am to believe the forgiveneſs of my ſins, what muſt be the ground of this my believing? The Lord muſt make his grant to me, and finding that, I have ground to believe it; then whenſoever this grant was made, the thing that I am to believe, was done in reſpect of God's act; now

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now we can find no grant, but as the Lord reveals the ſame in the word of his grace to us; when, therefore, that which is the foundation of my faith, was made, then the act of God was made to me, which I apply to myſelf.

If the Lord's laying iniquity upon Chriſt, has being, at the ſame inſtant men believe, then the grant which men believe, hath its firſt being then: ſo all grants, upon which men are to believe, muſt be new and immediate revelations, or they muſt be founded in the word of grace; if they be founded in that, then they were there before we believed; and if they were there before we believed, then the Lord, for his part, had paſſed over all that he intends to paſs over. Doth he paſs over any thing anew to men, beſides what is in the word of grace? Then that muſt be by a new revelation; and who can reſolve of that?

The word, and that alone, is ſufficient to make the man of God perfect, and fit for every good work. The mind of God is wholly contained in this word; and therefore it muſt needs be a miſtake in the minds of people, that God then begins to paſs over ſuch an act to them, that their iniquity is laid upon Chriſt, upon their believing; I ſay, believing follows, and gathers its ground from what God hath done already.

I have heard ſome argue, that God lays iniquity upon Chriſt, juſt then when men believe; becauſe the act, and the object about which it is converſant, are relatives, and therefore are in nature together; and are both as the Son and the Father; the

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the Father is no ſooner a Father, but the Son is a Son.

But, beloved, here is a miſtake; it is not faith that gives being to this act, or grant, that our iniquities ſhould be laid upon Chriſt, it is the Lord alone that gives being to it, and it is his act; ſo that it is true, iniquity is not laid upon Chriſt, till he lays it; but it follows not, that it was not laid upon him, till our act of believing goes along with it; becauſe that doth not give being to it, but is only a manifeſtation of that, which was before. This then is carefully to be premiſed, and obſerved, namely, the difference between the Lord's act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt, and the act of a believer, to apply that grace; concerning the latter, it is preſent to ſome, and future to others, as men believe; but the act of laying iniquity upon Chriſt is ſolely the Lord's, and was done before, and is not to be done.

Now let us come to conſider, when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt; he hath done it, it is paſt: but when did he do it, will you ſay? For the opening of this truth, there are ſome ſpecialities to be conſidered, as,

1. That the Lord laid iniquities upon Chriſt, by way of obligation.

2. By way of execution.

3. By way of his own application thereof to his people; for, as you ſhall hear, we muſt diſtinguiſh between God's application of this grace, and their application of it; this we ſhall ſpeak to afterwards.

We

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We come now to conſider, when the Lord laid iniquities upon Chriſt, and for that you muſt know; 1. the Lord laid them upon him, by way of obligation; I mean thus, he did then lay iniquity upon Chriſt, when he obliged himſelf to it; you know when a man once enters into bond, though peradventure, the day of payment may be ſome months, or years, after the bond is ſealed; yet when he enters into bond, he delivers that as his act and deed; at the firſt inſtant of the ſealing of the bond, then is the thing done; other ſpecialities, it may be, are cancelled, and the whole debt remains according to the tenor of the bond. So when the Lord entered into bond, he tied himſelf to lay iniquity upon Chriſt; then was his act and deed; then were all the ſpecialities cancelled, as they were charged upon us; and when was that? It was from all eternity; I ſay, God tied himſelf irrevocably then to lay iniquity upon Chriſt, even from all eternity; then he did it in his own determinate counſel; I mean, when in his own council, he determined it ſhould be done. God's determination and reſolution, that Chriſt ſhould bear the ſins of men, were the act of God's laying them upon him; and though, unhappily to this church, the everlaſting decree, and doctrine of God's election of men, hath been, and is ſtill, ſuppreſſed as a dangerous truth; yet you muſt know, beloved, that the foundation of all the gracious acts of God, was laid in this decree of election: the Lord ſat down, as a man may ſpeak with reverence, by himſelf, and drew out a draught of all the particular

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cular paſſages, eſpecially concerning his own people, how he would order and diſpoſe every thing in its ſeaſon; and, in this eternal council, he ſet down his fiat, It ſhould be ſo; and this fiat of the Lord, from all eternity, did make the thing itſelf an irrevocable act. You know, that the royal aſſent makes an act, and it is a real ſtatute; councils having contrived before, that which it yields unto. Now it may be, that that which royal aſſent makes an act, may not be of preſent uſe; that is, people may not have preſent occaſion of ſuch an act; ſuppoſe it be an act of grace; yet, notwithſtanding, from the firſt inſtant of that aſſent, it hath as much force in it, as when occaſion of uſe cometh, which is derived from it: ſo alſo the act of laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, that, that gives being to it, as an act, and ſo gives life to it, is the royal aſſent of God. When God firſt ſet his aſſent, that iniquity ſhould be borne by Chriſt, this made it an act as firm, good, and true, as ever will be. When a man hath occaſion to make uſe of a ſtatute of grace, there is no addition of force, added to it, when it is ſued out for uſe; it hath no more virtue in itſelf, than at the firſt inſtant, when the royal aſſent was put to it: when we, in time, by the grace of the Lord, make application of this, that our iniquities are laid upon Chriſt; this application of ours, gives not any being at all unto the thing; the grant, that had as much ſtrength and force in it, at the firſt aſſenting to it, as it hath when it is applied, or as ever it will have. Now, beloved, this is certain, that the

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the royal aſſent is a binding act, even from the very inſtant of it; kings, when they give it to an act of grace, are not only bound to make it good, when any perſon ſues it out, but they themſelves are bound at that inſtant, when they paſſed it, that they cannot revoke it. The Lord, it is true, was free in himſelf how to diſpoſe of the ſins of men; but when he had contrived for his own glory's ſake, and his people's good, that their iniquities ſhould be tranſacted to Chriſt, this counſel, though ſecret within his own breaſt, obliged him for ever to the thing; the Lord is unchangeable, *I am God, and change not, therefore ye, the ſons of* Jacob, *are not conſumed*, Mal. iii. 6. Now, beloved, ſhould there be any time in which the Lord ſhould not lay iniquity upon Chriſt, after his former aſſent to it, how could be be unchangeable? He did aſſent then, now he will not; is not this changeableneſs? So that the whole truth, faithfulneſs, and uprightneſs of God, is tied to make good the everlaſting laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, by virtue of this act of his own aſſent to it.

(2.) As there was a ſecret obligation upon God, which was from all eternity, to lay iniquity upon Chriſt; ſo there is a public and manifeſt tie upon him, when he openly, in the face of his people, and to them binds himſelf, even to their apprehenſions, that they ſee that he is obliged to it; then did the Lord lay the iniquity of his people upon Chriſt openly, when he did openly bind himſelf by covenant to do it; and that he did from the

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the firſt moment they were in any tranſgreſſion whatſoever. When *Adam*, as a common perſon, had ſinned for himſelf and his whole poſterity, the Lord bound himſelf by promiſe and covenant, to ſecure his people from ſuch tranſgreſſion by his Son Chriſt; *I will put enmity between thy ſeed and her ſeed*, (ſpeaking to the ſerpent of the woman, that is, *Eve*) *he ſhall break thine head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel*, Gen. iii. 15. As if he had ſaid, thou haſt got a great catch by getting the ſons of men under thy clutches, as thy prey; thou haſt bruiſed his heel by reaſon of tranſgreſſion; but the ſeed of the woman ſhall break thine head; the head, that is the ſeat of principality; therefore they that have the principality are called heads in ſcripture. Now, ſaith the text, *He ſhall break thine head;* that is, that, wherein conſiſteth thy chiefeſt ſtrength, ſhall be bruiſed and broken to pieces; becauſe that, wherein the ſtrength of headſhip lieth, ſhall be taken away from thee; the ſeed of the woman ſhall take away ſin, wherein the headſhip of Satan lieth. Now, as ſoon as the Lord had publiſhed this to men, he was under bond, that iniquity ſhould be borne by Chriſt.

Now you are not to conceive that this publication of God's grace is the firſt act of it by him, he having acted it in his councils long before; therefore the apoſtles being met together, on occaſion of perſecution, began to pray, and in prayer had this clauſe, *They have done* (ſpeaking of their cruelty to Chriſt) *whatever thy hand and thy coun-*

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ſel determined before to be done, Acts iv. 28. By which it plainly appears, that the act is not paſſed really in being in the publication of it; which is but an iſſue flowing from this firſt ſpring, from whence it derived its original; namely, the determinate council of the Lord. It was upon record in heaven before; now, upon occaſion, the record is taken out and publiſhed. As I ſaid before, it is royal aſſent, which gives being to an act of grace; it is not the publication of it in print, and making it known to the world, that gives being to it a jot; indeed that gives people the comfort of it, but royal aſſent gives being to the thing; publication doth not give ſo much as confirmation to it; only it gives ſettlement of ſpirit to the ſtaggering hearts of people, that know not what to do, nor where to ſet the ſole of their feet for reſt, till they have this grace publiſhed; and then venture themſelves upon it when publiſhed.

Concerning the laying of iniquity upon Chriſt, he doth not make a new act; all that he doth is but the publication and manifeſtation of it; not that the Lord is bound now, and not before, but that we might know he is bound, and have the ſtronger conſolation. In *Eph.* i. 4. the apoſtle ſpeaks expreſsly and fully touching God's eternal act, that gives being to this grace of laying iniquity upon Chriſt; and alſo, that, by which perſons reap the fruit of it, when they come to know it; he ſaith, *He hath choſen us in him before the foundation of the world.* And afterwards he tells us, this reaches to the *forgiveneſs of our ſins.* There you

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you shall find, that tho' the Lord was pleased to publish this grace, concerning laying of iniquities on Christ, yet it hath not its beginning then, but *before the foundation of the world was laid.* In brief, you must know, that though sin in creatures was not actually in being from all eternity; nay, though Christ, as having a body prepared, was not himself in being from eternity; yet the omnipresent eye of God, that fore-casts things with himself, that afterwards should come to pass, had every particular person in his own thoughts from all eternity, that should come in all after time, and before him they appeared, as if they had been actually existing then; and he had not only their persons, but in this omnipresent eye of his, he had every such transgression, that by every such person of his own, should from the first to the last of their being, be committed; he had all this at once in his eye. And having this platform before him, as if all were then in being, he sets down his own act of royal assent, that for every such person as he had chosen, and for every such transgression that should be committed at such and such a time, by such and such persons, he would accept of Christ whom he would fit to bear their transgressions; and, that from eternity to eternity, the Lord reckons all things as he had then and there set them down. We actually commit sin to-day, yesterday, and so shall again to-morrow; in the eternal councils of God, the very sin of this day, of yesterday, and of to-morrow, were all open* in

[* Heb. iv. 13.]

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the eyes of God; the Lord, from all eternity, looking upon theſe tranſgreſſions, aſſented to this, that Chriſt, for whom he would prepare a body, ſhould indeed, in time, actually bear them all; but, in God's account they muſt be reckoned as borne from all eternity by Chriſt, by way of obligation. Thus you ſee how the Lord, by way of obligation, lays the iniquities of his people upon Chriſt, and when he did thus lay them on him.

2. The Lord did lay the iniquities of his people upon Chriſt by way of execution; I mean thus, he laid iniquity upon him, as he did, in time, ſerve the execution upon him: as I told you before, a man makes himſelf actually a debtor, when he firſt enters into bond, and he goeth all that time for a debtor, from the ſealing of the bond; but the debt is properly laid upon him when an execution is ſerved upon him, and he is cauſed to make good the bond, and pay the debt; now is he actually called to account. The Lord, from all eternity, reckoned Chriſt to be the bearer of the tranſgreſſion of his people; but in time he ſerved the execution upon him.

Now it would be queſtioned when it was, that the Lord did this; that is, when he actually and really charged ſin upon him?

For the underſtanding of this, you muſt know that there is a twofold ſerving the execution upon Chriſt: it may be conſidered either virtual, or actual, and real. The execution is ſerved upon Chriſt in the virtue of it, from the firſt inſtant that ever there was a tranſgreſſion committed; and

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and not only when firſt committed, and from thence to the time of his ſuffering, but alſo afterwards, from the time he ſuffered, to the end of the world. You muſt of neceſſity admit of this diſtinction between the virtual and actual ſerving of the execution upon Chriſt; and the ground of it is this, that though the Lord took Chriſt for pay-maſter for all the ſins in the world that the elect would be guilty of; yet he was pleaſed to give him a long day of payment; the debt indeed run on from the fall of *Adam*, and ſo continued, and will continue to the end of the world; but Chriſt was not to come into the world till the fulneſs of time, *Gal.* iv. 4, 5. *And, when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons:* therefore it muſt follow, that either there could be no diſcharge from the time of the firſt commiſſion of ſin, till Chriſt appeared in the fleſh; or that before the actual payment that Chriſt made, there was the virtue of laying iniquity upon him; by which there was a diſcharge given before he had actually paid the debt.

To clear the point a little to you, conſider, a man ſends his ſon to the univerſity, to ſuch a tutor, who knows he is a rich man, and therefore, ſaith he, I will agree with you thus; I will teach your ſon ſo many years, and, at three years end, you ſhall pay all the arrear for the time paſt; and whatſoever it will come to for three years more. Now the father, according to the agreement made, comes at

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at one time, and reckons for all that is paſt for the tutorage of his ſon, and lays down that all at once; and, for the time to come, ſaith he, there is ſo much more, I will pay all that too, and make but one payment of all. So it is with Chriſt, he takes upon himſelf to diſcharge all the tranſgreſſions of thoſe to whom it is given to believe; the Lord takes Chriſt for it, he knows he is one that is mighty, and is contented therefore to lay his help upon him: now the time runs on from the firſt ſin committed, till the fulneſs of time that he comes; here is no payment all this while, no not of a farthing; yet God ſtill diſcharges men of their ſins; he diſcharged *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *David*, and all the reſt of the Fathers; and *bleſſed they were in that their iniquities were forgiven, and their ſins were covered*, Pſal. xxxii. 1. Here God acquits theſe believers under the Old Teſtament, but where is the payment? All this while he hath no ſatisfaction yet; why, he depends on Chriſt for ſatisfaction when the day of payment comes; and ſo ſatisfaction is made virtually before it be done by Chriſt actually: and ſo for after-times; Chriſt came in the fulneſs of time, and reckoned with the Father, and he hath ſo much of him for all that is paſt, and as much for all after-times to the end of the world; ſaith Chriſt to the Father, here is ſo much for every one of mine, that they have run out for the time that is paſt; and here is ſo much for every one of them that ſhall come after; they will commit ſo many ſins in time to come;

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come; here is ſo much for all that they ſhall commit.

Now there was a pitch'd time wherein God ſerved execution actually upon him; and that was when God forſook this Son of his; when he called him forth, and charged ſin upon him, and laid load upon load on him, as the deſert of tranſgreſſion*. Beloved, you know what our Saviour ſaith himſelf, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Now was the execution ſerved, and God charged the payment upon him, when he ſaid, *I am heavy unto death; Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me;* here was the time of payment, and of ſatisfying God. This was the very time of the end of ſeventy weeks, wherein there was an end put to ſin, and the finiſhing of tranſgreſſion: and you muſt know this, beloved, that, in this laying iniquity upon Chriſt by way of execution, there was the matter of the greateſt truſt in the world, between God the Father and his Son Chriſt: it had been

* This is charged as an error by D. W. in his *Goſpel-Truth*, &c. p. 28. that the time when our ſins were actually laid on Chriſt was when he was nailed to the croſs; but the Doctor does not ſay, that this was the firſt time ſin was charged upon him, and he bore it; for he after obſerves, that God charged it upon him in the garden, when he was *heavy unto death*, and ſaid, *If it be poſſible let this cup paſs from me;* tho', when he was offered upon the croſs as a ſacrifice for ſin, was more properly and preciſely the time when ſin was charged and laid upon him, and he bore it; the apoſtle ſays, That *Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of many*, Heb. ix. 28. ſo that it was when he was offered up, that ſin was laid upon him, and he bore it; yea, he was offered up, that it might be done, and appear to be done: the apoſtle *Peter* is ſtill more expreſs for this; *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. hence it appears, that it was upon the croſs that ſin was charged, and the load was laid, and there borne.

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a toilsome thing to Christ to pay every debt, one after another, as it was taken up; and therefore, to save all this trouble, God was contented all should be paid at once; and likewise that Christ should do all in equality of time; not pay all at first, nor at last, but in the middle time; as if a man were to take up wares at several times, some at the beginning of the year, and some at the end of it, and pay all his money at the middle of it: so was it between God and his Son; something was to be paid at the beginning of the world; and something at the end of it; now to make an equality, Christ pays all at the middle time, or some good time before the end; God is content to trust him from the beginning until the fulness of time; and he did so trust him, that he discharged all the sins of the elect before payment, as if already done. At the fulness of time, Christ comes and pays all for the time past, and so dischargeth that trust of God the Father upon him; and moreover pays to the full for all the sins that should be committed afterwards; so that now the Son trusts the Father, that he will reckon right with him, and deal justly with him. The price is fully paid into the hands of the Father, for all the elect to the end of the world, at that instant that Christ suffered; yet the value of this price is to be made out many hundreds of years after; wherein the Father is to give out unto man the worth of that Christ paid, even to the end of the world, as if he had not been paid before.

So that, in brief, look upon the execution, or rather the serving of the execution, that is, the actual

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actual laying iniquity upon Chriſt; this was done at that inſtant when he was upon the croſs, and God nailed the ſins of men to it; and from that time there was not one ſin to be reckoned either to believers, who are the members of Chriſt, or to himſelf; he having then made ſatisfaction, and upon it given out to the world, *it is finiſhed*: what was finiſhed? the payment of the price ſo long looked for. The utmoſt farthing is now laid down, therefore the prophet *Iſaiah*, in his 53d chapter, ſaith expreſsly, that when the Lord beheld the travail of his ſoul, he was then ſatisfied, when the work of the Lord was in the hand of Chriſt; that is, when he was actually managing the buſineſs of bearing the weight of ſin; then the pleaſure of the Lord proſpered on him; then the work went on with ſuch ſucceſs in his hand, that it proſpered; then came this iſſue of his labour, that he obtained his Father's pleaſure that he aimed at; when the thing comes into the hands of Chriſt, then the pleaſure of the Lord goeth on.

There yet remains one thing very conſiderable, and that is the application of this grace to particular perſons, and the time when the Lord comes to this man, and to that woman, and calls out perſons particularly, and applies it to them, as the grace of this perſon individually, *Thy iniquity is laid upon Chriſt.* This requires more time to open it, than now we have; and therefore in the afternoon we ſhall have opportunity elſewhere.

SERMON

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SERMON XXIII.

Our Sins already laid on Chriſt.

ISAIAH liii. 6.

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I HAVE elſewhere made ſome progreſs in theſe words; which indeed contain in them the fulneſs of the myſtery of free-grace. It is iniquity itſelf, as well as the puniſhment of it, that the Lord laid upon Chriſt: he bare the ſins of many, as well as he was wounded for them: this is a real tranſaction; Chriſt ſtands as very a ſinner in God's eye, as the reprobate, though not as the actor of ſin; yet as he was the ſurety, the debt became as really his, as it was the principal's before it became the ſurety's; and this tranſlation of our iniquities from us unto Chriſt, is the ſole and only act of the Lord himſelf; none but he could lay iniquity on him.

The *fourth* thing conſiderable in the words, is, *The Lord hath done it already:* it is not, the Lord doth

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doth lay, or will lay, iniquity upon Chriſt; but he hath laid it upon him: the buſineſs is not to be done now. Thou haſt, peradventure, this day committed this, and that, and the other ſin; yet the Lord is not now to lay it upon Chriſt; it is done long ago.

We have entered upon this point elſewhere this morning: and here I briefly propoſe to you this, for the better clearing of the time, when the Lord laid iniquity upon Chriſt; and I will leave it with you as a caution to diſtinguiſh between the Lord's act of laying iniquity, and the believer's act of applying this grace to himſelf. When we believe our iniquities are laid on Chriſt, is one time; when God lays them, is another: God, long before we believed, laid them upon Chriſt; and, when we believe, the foundation of it is an ancient grant that we find upon record, enacted and entered long ago: faith hath a word of truth, if it be true faith, whereupon it builds; it looks not for preſent revelation of things not extant before, but takes them as it finds them upon record. When the record is firſt entered, nay, when the act was firſt made, from whence it was entered, then was the grant; then God did his part in laying iniquity upon Chriſt; and we, in time, by the grace of the Lord given to us, to believe, find out his ancient grant, which now at believing, becomes apparent, and ſo comes our application. Application is, at preſent, or may be hereafter; but the laying iniquity itſelf, is an act paſſed long before by God.

For

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For the better understanding of God's laying iniquity upon Christ, when he did it, there are these three things considerable.

1. The Lord's laying iniquity upon Christ by way of obligation.

2. By way of execution.

3. By way of application of this benefit to us.

1. God's act of laying iniquity upon Christ by way of obligation; so he laid it upon him, as soon as ever he was bound to it; a bond is a man's act and deed before payment. As soon as ever God bound himself, the iniquity was laid upon Christ; for he had forfeited his own faithfulness, if he had not fulfilled it. Now the time wherein he thus laid it on Christ, was from all eternity. Royal assent gives being to any act of grace. Before there could be any believing of this grace, God's assent by his determinate counsel*, gave being to it.

2. Then there was the laying iniquity on Christ by way of execution; Christ from all eternity stood engaged to answer for the sins of the elect, but God gives him a long day of payment. There is a twofold laying iniquity upon Christ by way of execution, the one virtual, and the other real and actual: the virtual laying iniquity on Christ, was long before payment, but the other at it. *Abraham* sinning, his sins were laid on Christ; God laid his execution upon him, for the sins of *Abraham*; and yet, notwithstanding, Christ was not actually called to account, where observe, that

[* Acts iv. 28.]

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here was but a virtual execution ſerved upon Chriſt, not the actual; the real and actual way of execution is, or rather was, when Chriſt actually ſtood out, and had the load of ſin preſſing him down, ſaying, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Now ſin actually lay upon him: *Your iniquities*, ſaith the prophet, *have ſeparated you and your God:* when iniquity came once to ſeparate, then was it actually laid upon Chriſt; he himſelf was ſeparated from his Father, and then did he bear iniquity; then was he called to account for it: but I haſten.

3. There is one thing more very conſiderable, that is, the Lord's laying iniquity upon Chriſt, by way of application; I mean, when it is that the Lord ſingles out this, and that, and the other perſon, now preſent, and takes your very ſins you have committed, and ſhall hereafter, and lays them upon him. Concerning the elect in general, as they were in the eye of the Lord, before they had a real exiſtence, ſo all their iniquities were laid upon Chriſt from eternity; but it muſt needs be granted, beloved, that the particular application of this grace to perſons, that the Lord hath laid my, and thy iniquities upon Chriſt individually, muſt needs be in time. Before a man is in being, there cannot be a perſonal application of the grace of God unto him; God cannot apply his grace to nothing. Though in his eye he may apprehend a perſon as being, though not actually, and ſo reckon Chriſt as a ſinner, inſtead of him, when he be; yet to ſay to ſuch a one by name, thy iniquities

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ties are laid upon Chriſt; and the Lord reckons thee in perſon, as ſuch a one who hath not one iniquity he can charge upon thee, this is done in time. Now it will be worth the while, to know when the Lord ſingles out particular perſons, and when this grace of laying this man's iniquities upon Chriſt, is appropriated by him to him; for you muſt know, that there is a twofold appropriation of God's grace of laying iniquity upon Chriſt. There is God's application, and man's application; God's application is, when he himſelf ſays from heaven, that he loves this very perſon; and that his iniquities are carried away by Chriſt. Man's application is, when God gives to him to believe, and by this act, to be perſuaded that he hath done it: we are yet upon the firſt *kind of* application, when the Lord himſelf applies to ſuch a particular perſon, that his iniquities are laid upon Chriſt.

In the clearing of this, beloved, I muſt tell you, I dare not confine myſelf to the judgment of any man under heaven; nor pin my faith upon any man's ſleeve; to conceive ſuch a thing truth, becauſe ſuch men ſpeak it; and therefore I ſhall deſire you, if you be ſincere, and mean that the word of the Lord ſhall be your guide, to reſolve you in ſuch comfortable truths, to mind not ſo much what I, or any man ſay, as what the Lord himſelf ſaith; and according to the clearneſs of the Lord, in his own word, ſo ſet you up your reſt.

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And that you may be the better reſolved of this truth, ſo much inquired into, when the Lord laid my, and thy iniquities, upon his Son Chriſt; know that he laid the iniquities of every elect perſon two ways upon him; 1. Secretly; 2. Manifeſtly and openly: in the ſecret application of this grace unto a man, he hath a full diſcharge; and in the manifeſtation hereof, in the ſecond way of application, he hath the comfort of it.

As concerning the Lord's ſecret applying unto a perſon, the grace of laying his iniquity upon Chriſt; I ſhall deſire you, beloved, (that you may ſee in one view, both how the Lord did this, and the time when he doth it: it is a ſecret thing, for a time, to thoſe for whom he doth it,) to look into *Rom.* ix. 10, 11, 12, 13, a place very well worth your conſideration, that hath been much canvaſſed; yet, for all this, I ſee the evidence of the Spirit of the Lord, is not ſo fully ſeen as poſſibly it might be. The apoſtle there tells us, of the admirable free grace of God, and how that the Lord in ſhewing mercy, intends that it may appear to all the world, that what he doth, is merely and ſolely of grace, and for his own ſake; and for the illuſtration of it, he bringeth in an example of *Rebecca* and her ſons, *Jacob* and *Eſau*, ſaying, *When* Rebecca *conceived by one, even by our father* Iſaac, *the children being yet unborn, neither having done any good or evil, (that the purpoſe of God, according to election, might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth) it was ſaid unto her, the elder ſhall ſerve the younger; as it is written,* Jacob *have*

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have I loved, but Esau *have I hated*: mark the words well I pray you. Out of this passage I shall note these particulars to you: first, you have here expressed the Lord's declaring himself personally and individually unto the one, *Jacob*, I mean, that he loved him: there was a love from eternity to him, as he was one among the rest, in the election of grace; but mark it well, beloved, till there was a single individual person, as *Jacob*, the Lord did not say, Jacob *have I loved*; therefore you shall see, here is a personal singling out of *Jacob* by name, distinct from any other whatsoever, and a love pronounced to him, Jacob *have I loved.*

Then consider next, what kind of love this was, that the Lord here pronounces on *Jacob*; it is a love that is opposed to the hatred, wherewith he hated *Esau*; now what kind of hatred was that? You know the hatred of *Esau*, was a hatred of rejection; the love of *Jacob*, then, was a love of acceptance; a love, wherewith he received him as one of his own: now then consider, when the Lord first began personally to fasten this his love, the love of his justification; the text saith, *When they were not yet born, neither had done good or evil, that the purpose of God might stand, according to election, not of works, but of grace, it is said,* Jacob *have I loved:* as much as to say, the Lord did not tarry some space of time after *Jacob* had a being till he called him, and then pronounced love unto him, as if there had been no love to him, till he was called; but before he came into the world, while

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while he was yet in the womb; nay, when he was first conceived, the Lord pronounced, Jacob *have I loved*; and yet this was a secret, that there was any such thing as love to him; he being yet in the womb, and not capable to understand, that God did thus love him: so that it is plain, there is a secret passing over of the grace of God, into the possession of a particular person, before he can know it; and this hath its being in the very conception, as soon as he hath any being.

From whence I gather this conclusion, that God applies or appropriates, unto his elect, his grace of discharge from all iniquity, and his love, at the very instant that such a person hath a being in the world.

I am not ignorant, how men differ in their judgments about God's first applying his grace unto the sons of his election: some think that God never applies pardon of sins to them till they be called and manifestly converted, but this cannot be; *Jacob* could not be called in the womb, but he was beloved in it, with such a love, as was opposed to the hatred of *Esau*. And others affirm, that the Lord first appropriates justification to persons when they are baptized, and not before; this cannot be neither; for (whereas circumcision had the place of baptism) *Jacob* was declared manifestly to be beloved before circumcision; and in *Rom.* iv. 10. the apostle (speaking of *Abraham*'s faith) saith expressly, that the Lord justified him, *not being in circumcision, but in uncircumcision*; then

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the Lord singled him out, and possessed him of his own grace before ever he was circumcised.

Let me tell you, beloved, I conceive people are much mistaken, and exceedingly trouble their own spirits in vain, about the time when the Lord should give them their possession of this grace of laying their iniquities upon Christ. It is thought by some, that in case such a person should happen to die before God call him to grace, and give to him to believe, that he had been damned; and that elect persons are in a damnable estate, in the time they walk in excess of riot, before they are called. Let me speak freely to you, and, in so doing, tell you, that the Lord hath no more to lay to the charge of an elect person, yet in the height of iniquity, and in the excess of riot, and committing all the abominations that can be committed; I say, even then, when an elect person runs such a course, the Lord hath no more to lay to his charge, than he hath to lay to the charge of a believer; nay, he hath no more to lay to the charge of such a person, than he hath to lay to the charge of a saint triumphant in glory*. It is true, such an one,

* Not that the sins of God's elect, in a state of unregeneracy, are not sins; or that they are not guilty of sin; nor that they are not deserving of the wrath of God, for they are *children of wrath even as others*; or that they are not under the same sentence of condemnation: but then, as the elect of God, as they are redeemed by Christ, and as he has had their sins laid upon him, and made full satisfaction for them, as full as for the saints in heaven, no more charge can be brought against them by the justice of God, than against these; nor is it possible that they should come into a state of actual condemnation and death, or suffer the vindictive wrath and justice of God: it should be observed,

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one, not called, is never able to know individually of himself, that he is one that God hath nothing to charge upon him; because, till calling, God gives not unto men to believe, and it is only believing that is evidence to men of things not seen. Things that are not seen, are hidden, and shall not be known; I mean, the things of God's love shall not be known to particular men, till they believe; but, considering their real condition, the Lord hath not one sin to charge upon an elect person, from the first moment of conception, till the last minute of his life; there is not so much as original sin to be laid on him; and the ground is, the Lord hath laid it on Christ already: when did he lay sins on him? when he paid the full price for them. Now, suppose this person, uncalled, commits iniquity, and that this is charged upon him; seeing that his iniquities are laid upon Christ already, how comes it to pass they are charged upon him again? How come they to be translated from Christ again, and laid upon him? Once they were

served, that this is said in opposition to some, who thought elect persons in a damnable state, before calling: that judgment is come upon them to condemnation sententially, as they are considered in *Adam*, and transgressors of the law, is owned; and that their sins are deserving of eternal damnation will be granted; but that there is a possibility of their being damned, must be denied; or the election of God would not stand sure; redemption, by Christ, would be in vain, and his satisfaction must be void; they are as secure from damnation before calling, as after, though they have not the knowledge, sense, and comfort of it, till they believe. The Doctor says not, that a man, living and dying in such a state shall be saved; but that an elect person shall be saved, who shall believe, be changed in heart and life. See the Doctor's own answer, to the charge against him for these words, in his Serm. on *Cant.* iv. 7.

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laid upon Christ it must be confessed: *For the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin*, 1. *John.* i. 7. and *by one sacrifice he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. x. 14. Was there, by one act of Christ, the expiation of sins, and all at once, that are committed from the beginning of the world to the end of it? How comes it to pass that this and that sin should be charged upon the elect, when they were laid upon Christ long before? He did, by that one act of his, expiate all our sins, or he did not: if he did not expiate them fully, then he did not *save to the uttermost all that come to God by him*; but, if he did, then all iniquity is vanished and gone; he extracted it out, as some plaister, of excellent virtue, extracts out the venom of a plague-sore; so Christ, by once offering up himself, took away all the sins of the elect at once.

Therefore, beloved, I cannot see what the instant of time may be wherein the Lord hath not yet taken the sins of such an elect person, and laid them upon Christ; suppose the distance of time between birth and baptism, which is the neareſt time any man comes to; now, before baptism, where lie these iniquities? an elect person is conceived in sin, as *David* was, what becomes of it? where lies it? doth it lie upon him now? Then was it not laid upon Christ before, and so his blood hath not cleansed from all sin; he hath not borne all the transgressions of his people; he hath not perfected for ever them that are sanctified by one sacrifice upon the cross. He that hath one sin lying

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ing upon him, is not perfect till that be taken from him; but ſaith the apoſtle, *By one ſacrifice he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified:* but it ſeems by this, that he hath not perfected them; here is a middle time, or ſome time wherein ſuch a perſon is not perfect; for there is no perfection while there is ſin: if there be ſin upon perſons, how can ſuch be perfect? Therefore know, beloved, to your abundant comfort, that every elect veſſel of God, from the firſt inſtant of his being, is as pure in the eyes of God, from the charge of ſin as he ſhall be in glory; no more ſin ſhall be reckoned to him now, than he ſhall have in heaven: the ſaints in heaven, how came they to be pure and holy, but only thus, Chriſt bare their iniquities for them, and paid the price of their tranſgreſſions? for if they had gone to heaven, and he had not borne them, they muſt have carried them with them; their purity is, that he bore their iniquities, and how did he bear the iniquities of a ſaint in heaven? it is all one with his bearing the ſins of an elect perſon in the womb: the ſcripture makes no ſuch difference, that he bore the ſins of the one more, and otherwiſe, than the ſins of the other; but he equally perfected all the elect at once. The ſaints in heaven were no ſooner perfected, than the elect child in the womb, ſave that there is a diſtance of time between the firſt being of the one, and of the other; for as thoſe now in glory had their firſt purity in the womb, ſo every elect perſon now receives his there.

Beloved,

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Beloved, I ſhould be loth to put any new and ſtrange things into the minds of men, that are not fully conſonant to the mind of God recorded in the ſcripture; but I ſee not how it can be avoided, but that Chriſt's ſacrifice muſt be an imperfect one, and that it ſanctified by halves, and degrees, and ſo he muſt do ſomething more than he hath done, except there be a complete purging away of ſin all at one inſtant: ſurely, Chriſt muſt do ſomething anew, if ſomething yet remain to be done; if there be any one ſin in the world concerning the elect, to be taken away, he muſt come down again upon the earth to take it away; if there be but a farthing behind, he muſt come down again and pay it, before ever they be perfectly acquitted: but Chriſt left nothing behind him imperfect; and herein the apoſtle ſhews the difference between Chriſt's prieſthood and that after the order of *Aaron*; ſpeaking of *Aaron*'s, he ſaith, *There is a remembrance of ſin again every year*; for that their ſacrifices could not make the comers thereto perfect, and therefore they were fain to reiterate them; but when Chriſt came, he offered himſelf up once for all, and then *ſat down at the right hand of God*: ſurely Chriſt ſhould have had no leiſure to ſit down, if any buſineſs of his were to be done; and if there be a remembrance of ſin again, there muſt be a new ſacrifice, to take away thoſe ſins whereof there is a remembrance; ſo that if you ſuppoſe any elect perſon, at any time, to have ſin not yet taken away, Chriſt muſt come again upon the earth, and offer himſelf up again; for *without ſhedding*

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ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion.' Chriſt muſt come to ſhed his blood again, if there be new ſins to be remitted that were not remitted before.

Beloved, this may be of uſe to you in ſome reſpect, in behalf of your children; ſuppoſe they die in the womb, as you have many abortives; the caſe of ſuch a child is the ſame, and as good as is the eſtate of a perſon that hath attained to the moſt evident calling as ever man was called by; for *Jacob* was beloved when *Rebecca* conceived him, while yet he was in the womb; and the Lord appropriates and applies to ſuch a perſon that grace of his, the laying of his iniquity upon Chriſt.

I deny not but that the ſcripture ſpeaks of a time of regeneration; but I deſire you will underſtand, according to the mind of the Holy Ghoſt, what this time is that is ſpoken of: I know it is the time of calling, but this is no prejudice at all to the applying of the grace of God, even from the womb. Take this regeneration for the act of converſion, and that is done in time, and it will amount to this; that though God ſecretly gives over the right and title of his own grace to a perſon in the womb, yet he doth not make it known to him till he hath it, till ſuch time as he calls him: in *Gal.* iv. 1, 2, 3, the apoſtle, having ſpoken of the difference between the law and the goſpel, that during the time of being under the law, they were under ſchoolmaſters, tutors, and governors, ſaith, *When faith is come, we are no longer under a ſchoolmaſter*; then he follows that with a freſh allegory, and makes uſe

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uſe of the ſimilitude of an heir, and a child under age; *Now this I ſay*, ſaith he, *that the heir, ſo long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a ſervant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father: Even ſo we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* Wherein I obſerve,

1. That there is an heirſhip during childhood itſelf; *The heir as long as he is a child*, ſaith the apoſtle.

2. That there is this heirſhip when there is no difference between being a ſon and a ſervant; *While he is a child, he differs nothing from a ſervant, though he be lord of all:* he is an heir, though there be no difference between him and a ſervant, during his childhood: what is the reaſon there is no difference during that? *He is*, ſaith he, *under tutors and governors*; how doth he apply this? *Even ſo we, when we were children, were in bondage under the rudiments of the world: but when the fulneſs of time was come, he ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons*; as if he had ſaid, there is a time when a perſon is an heir under age; and there is a time when he comes to enjoy that whereof he is an heir, and differs from a ſervant manifeſtly, as indeed in nature he doth, and did before: a child is an heir, if the firſt born,

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born, as ſoon as ever born; nay, when he is firſt conceived in the womb. Suppoſe a man die eſtated in a great deal of land, leaving his wife but a month gone with child, he leaves his child as heir; yet for all this, there is a long time in the womb, and alſo of education, in which this child is uſed as a ſervant; there is no difference appears, he hath no more in poſſeſſion than a ſervant, yet this Child is ſtill an heir: ſo it is with all believers; the elect of God are the heirs of God; and as they are, ſo the firſt being of them puts them into the right of inheritance; he that is an heir born, is an heir the firſt moment he is conceived: ſo that either you muſt allow, that there is a time when an elect perſon is not an heir, or you muſt confeſs, that there is no time but ſuch a one is a child of God; and, as ſuch, is purged from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit; purged, I mean, by way of imputation, in the reckoning and account of God: though ſins be committed afterwards in reſpect of which there may be for a time no difference between the life of an heir, and the life of a ſervant; yet as this perſon is an heir of all, ſo none of his iniquity is reckoned to him, nor ever ſhall be in this life, nor in the life to come, though for the time he doth not know it.

But ſome will be ready to object, how is it poſſible, that from the firſt inſtant of an elect perſon's being, all his ſins ſhould be reckoned as laid upon Chriſt? Can a ſin be laid upon him before it is committed?

I anſwer,

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I anſwer, Sin is laid upon Chriſt before it is; and it is no abſurdity in reaſon itſelf to ſay ſo: you know it is poſſible a man may buy out treſpaſſes before he doth them; ſuppoſe a man is addicted to hawking and hunting, and muſt treſpaſs upon his neighbour's ground; he may lay down a good large ſum at once, that ſhall countervail all the treſpaſſes that ſhall be done afterwards; beloved, ſhall any man ſay, that there was no treſpaſs borne, paid, and ſatisfied by Chriſt, becauſe there was none acted? what then ſhall become of all the elect that have been in the world ſince Chriſt's coming, if there be not a real ſerving of ſin upon him, and ſatisfaction made by him, before ſin be committed? What will become of the ſins of the apoſtles, and of the people of God ſince them? all their ſins were committed ſince the reckoning was made; and if of particular perſons in the church, why not ſo of every particular elect perſon by himſelf? If you ſhall have no more ſins laid upon Chriſt, or reckoned to him, but what were committed before he made payment, there will be none of our ſins found to be laid upon him; for all our ſins have been committed ſince he ſuffered.

Some object, and ſay, Chriſt puts us upon prayer, that God would forgive us our treſpaſſes; how can our iniquities be laid upon Chriſt already, when we are to pray that God would forgive them to us? It is a vain thing for us to pray for forgiveneſs, when they were long ago forgiven.

I anſwer,

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I anſwer, They were reckoned to Chriſt long before we pray for the forgiveneſs of them, and yet we do well in praying for it. We have a common anſwer known to all, there is a twofold forgiveneſs of ſins, a forgiveneſs of ſins in heaven, and in the conſciences of men. Forgiveneſs of ſins in heaven, is that which is acted by God alone; forgiveneſs of ſins in the conſcienees of men, is the manifeſtation of his former act. So then to pray for it, is no more but to pray that God would manifeſt to us that he hath forgiven our ſins; and that it may be clear that he hath forgiven them, before we pray for it; and that prayer is grounded upon God's act before-hand made.

Conſider this one thing: I would aſk this of you, you that pray for forgiveneſs of your ſins; do you pray in faith, or not? If not, mark what the apoſtle *James* ſaith, chap. i. 6. *Let him aſk in faith, nothing wavering; he that wavereth, let him not think he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord:* beloved, your prayers ſtink in the noſtrils of God, if you do not pray in faith. Well, you pray in faith, you will ſay: if you do, if you pray for the forgiveneſs of ſin in faith, what is the ground of your faith? If you believe, you have a ground for it; you will ſay, the grant and word of God is the ground of it. Well, if that be the ground of your believing, then the grant hath a being before your faith, and ſo conſequently before your prayer is made: as for example, God promiſed forgiveneſs of ſins; now ſin was forgiven by him as ſoon as ever he made the grant and record; at that

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that inſtant, it was made, ſin was forgiven, and God did his part in pardoning the tranſgreſſions of his people. Well then, if you pray in faith that your ſins are forgiven, upon this ground, becauſe God hath made this grant, and you find it upon record; then it ſeems your ſins were forgiven you before your prayer was made. You will ſay, God hath granted this before, and now you pray to God that he would make good that to you which he hath granted before. Beloved, what is this more than to make that evident to you, and to give you the knowledge of that which he hath before granted, that you may have the comfort of it?

In brief, when people pray for any grace that God hath paſſed over to men, all their prayer is, that he would make them perceive that he hath done that for them in ſpecial; ſo that all our prayers get no new thing of God that he hath not done before; only he is pleaſed, when people pray to him according to his own mind, to meet with them in that ordinance, and then to manifeſt to them what ſecretly he had done before for them.

To conclude. If ſo, here is a word of admirable comfort to poor ſouls, in that bitter ſuſpence they uſually are: thou art in a wavering condition; I know not (ſayeſt thou) whether God hath laid mine iniquities upon Chriſt or no; I hope well, that Chriſt is at work with the Father for me; I hope I ſhall hear well from him. Beloved, your ſuſpence may fall to the ground; your buſineſs is done to your hand already; there is not one gone about

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about to do it in heaven for you now, as if it were in the power and pleaſure of God to grant or not to grant: obſerve the ſaying of the apoſtle, in *Rom.* x. 6, 7, *&c.* that you may have the greater conſolation that God intends to you, ſettledneſs of ſpirit, that the pardon of ſin is ſo firm that you need no more look after it with fear or doubting; where he follows his former diſcourſe, having largely diſputed upon the freeneſs of God's grace, he begins to draw towards a concluſion; for he tells us there expreſsly, *That the righteouſneſs, which is of faith, ſpeaks on this wiſe, Say not in thy heart, who ſhall aſcend up to heaven? that is, to bring Chriſt from thence; nor who ſhall deſcend into the deep? that is, to raiſe Chriſt from the dead: but what ſaith it? the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart; and this is the word of faith which we preach.* Before you ſhall find the apoſtle ſpeaking of the eſtabliſhing our own righteouſneſs, and neglecting the righteouſneſs of God; and here he comes, in the cloſure, to ſhew what this righteouſneſs of God is, he preſſeth ſo much upon men, and chargeth them with the neglect of: it is as if he ſhould ſay, You think, you muſt take a great deal of pains, by your own righteouſneſs, to obtain the pardon of your ſins, and what would you have? You will, you muſt, climb up higher, and go down ſteps to do it: but, ſaith he, the righteouſneſs of faith runs in another ſtrain; there will be no clambering up to heaven to fetch Chriſt down, nor going down to hell to fetch him up; there is no ſuch thing to be done, nor required of you: he is come already,

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already, therefore you may save all your pains, care, and fear; he is in your mouths and in your hearts; he is in you and with you, already; as if he had said, You may well save all your fears, cares and doubts of your condition, whether Christ hath obtained grace with the Father, on your behalf in this point, or no: know that the work is done and finished to your hand; the pardon is come down from heaven already. You know what distraction and trouble must needs be in the heart of a malefactor condemned to die, as long as his pardon is in agitation, when he hath a friend gone to court to get it for him; he is now in hope that his friend will procure it; he is by-and-by full of fear lest his business should miscarry, and he be executed; but when the pardon is sealed, and he knoweth it is done, when it is brought to him, and he hath it in his hand, then his heart leaps within him, he hath no joy till then. I tell you, beloved, Christ is not now gone to heaven to get a pardon, but he hath got one under seal already; it is in your hands, and in your mouths, and at your doors; it is with you, and in you; iniquity is laid on Christ already.

Well, hath he done it, and shall he change? Will he not be as good as his word? Heaven and earth shall pass, but one word that he hath spoken shall not fall to the ground. When *Jacob* had got the blessing, by deceit, from his father, yet, saith he, *I have blessed him, and he is blessed, and shall be blessed*; I have said it, and I will stand to it. Shall *Isaac*, a man, stand to what he did in blessing,

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bleſſing, though out of a miſtake? and ſhall the God of heaven and earth, that did ſuch an act of bleſſing, by laying iniquities upon Chriſt, not upon miſtake, but upon determinate counſel, go from his word? *Let God be true, and every man a liar.* This is like the law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, that ſhall never be diſannulled; it is enacted and paſſed under hand and ſeal, that he hath laid on Chriſt the iniquities of us all.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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